FERRARI 250TR EXCLUSIVE BLAST IN A LE MANS WINNER

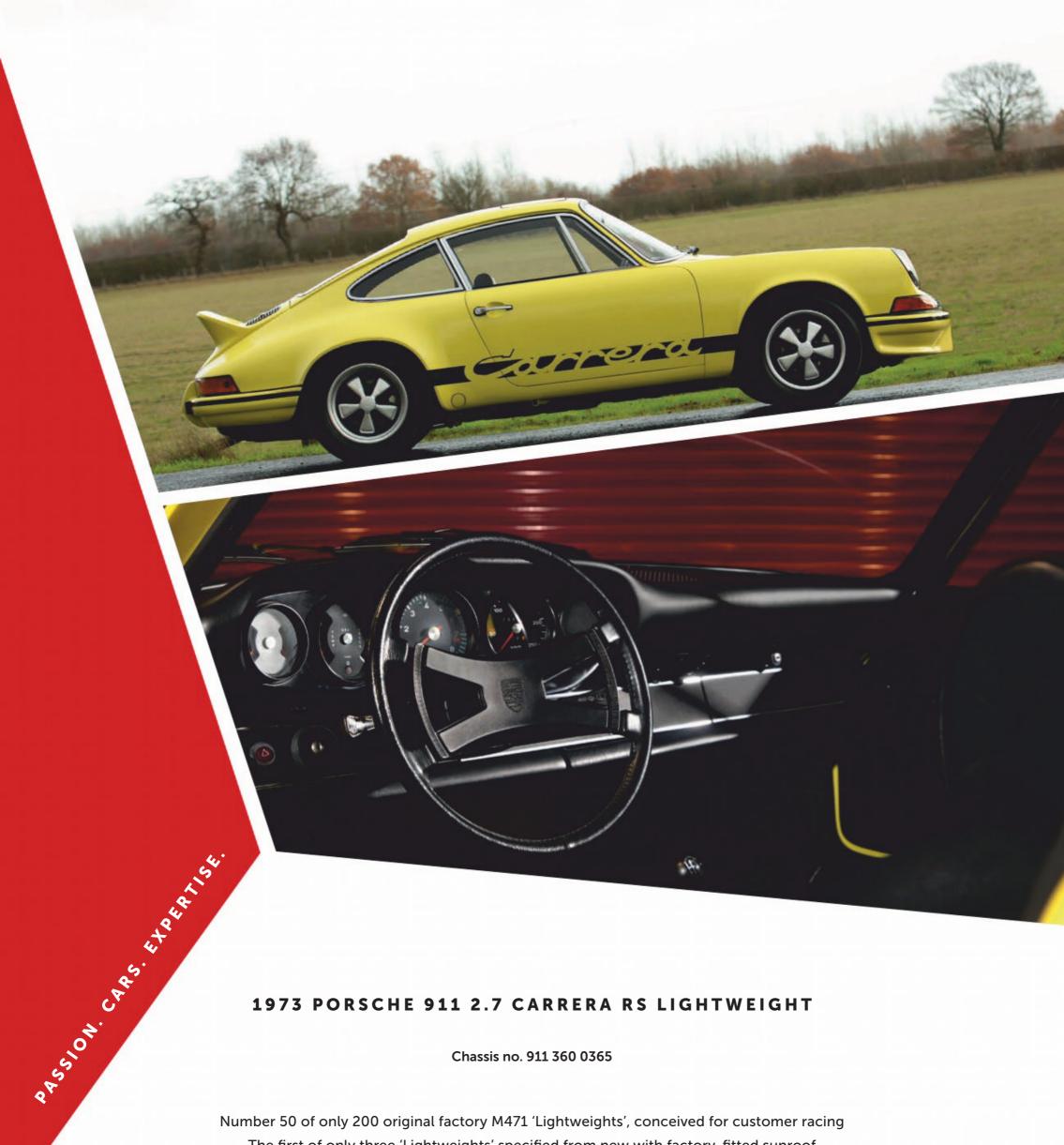




RALLY ICONS: ALÉN & FIAT-ABARTH 131

LAGONDA'S MIGHTY LG45 & V12 RAPIDE

GT GREATS: JAGUAR XJ-S vs LOTUS ELITE



1973 PORSCHE 911 2.7 CARRERA RS LIGHTWEIGHT

Chassis no. 911 360 0365

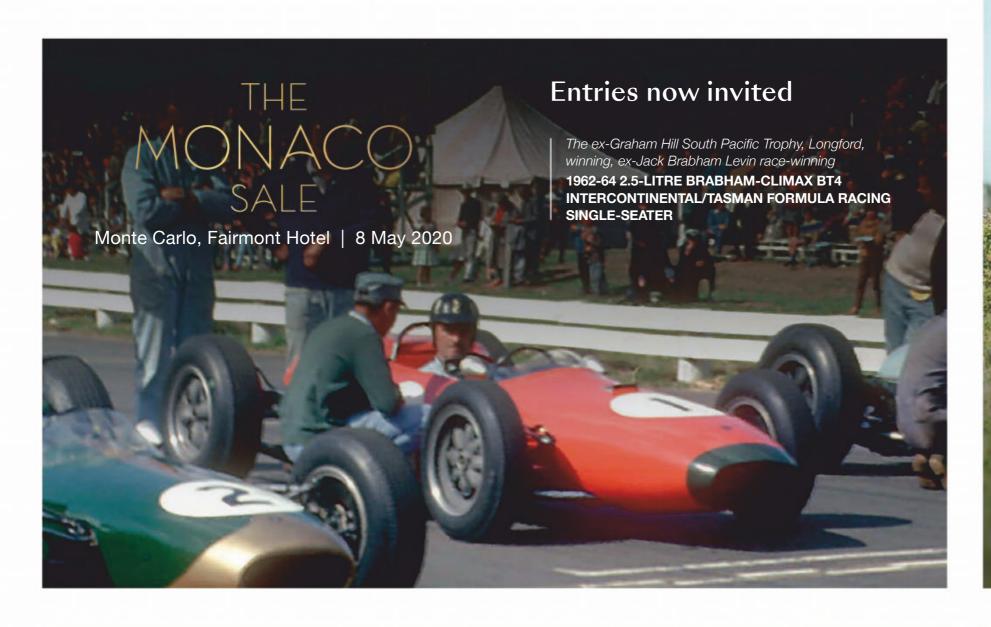
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Welcome

urely we have all played it? That game where you give yourself an imaginary multi-million-pound budget and put together a dream garage consisting of your favourite classics – for me always starting Ferrari 250GT SWB (obviously), AC Ace Bristol and Jaguar MkX. But how many of you have a piece of Japanese machinery nestling in that fantasy heated motor house?

Just like when they first arrived on the mainstream global market as new cars, Far Eastern classics tend to be treated with a touch of scepticism at best, at worst sneering cynicism. The good news is that this can result in some bargain price-tags, as Andrew Roberts' story on the Japanese pioneers reveals (p106).

As a convert already, my dream list has traditionally included several, with the Toyota 2000GT very close to the top... Until I drove one, that is, and realised that, like Sean Connery (admittedly it's all we have in common), I simply don't fit in them. Never meet your heroes.

As Greg MacLeman discovered this month, however, the Datsun 240Z (p98) is reversing preconceptions today just as it did in period, and in the process is rapidly appreciating. Frustratingly, that means a

car I had pencilled into my 'maybe one day' list has now moved into the lottery-win realm. And if money is no object, I think I might go the whole hog and have a Z432!

ALASTAIR CLEMENTS
Editor in chief

'Japanese manufacturers have become masters at analysing the competition to inform their designs, but the Z blazed the trail'













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JAGUAR XJ-S vs LOTUS ELITE

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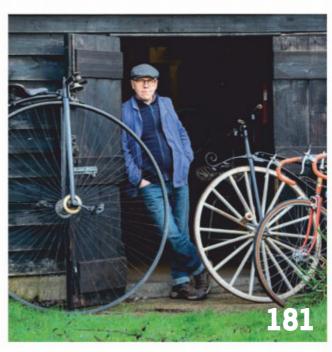
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Maastricht's tribute to the bygone greats

The 27th InterClassics show in the Dutch university city highlighted lost marques

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY MICK WALSH

he European classic show season kicked off in style from 16-19 January in The Netherlands with InterClassics Maastricht's dramatic special feature 'Forgotten Classics: Epic Designs from the Past'. The diverse 24-car display of lost causes ranged from pre-war coachbuilt greats – headed by a magnificent 1929 Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8A Castagna Roadster – to classics of recently forsaken names such as Saab, DAF and Datsun.

Rarities included a 1951 Veritas 351 Nürburging with cabriolet bodywork by Spohn, a sexy 1952 Siata 208S 8C Rocco Motto Spider and a Pegaso Z-102 GT Berlinetta. But it was the highly original survivors that created the most interest, none more so than a very rare 1953 Saab 92B Deluxe that had recently been unearthed in Sweden, and a 1930 Voisin C4 that was discovered in 1950 near Lake Como by Mille Miglia veteran and journalist Count Giovanni 'Johnny' Lurani, but never restored.

The Dutch event started back in 1994, when it was organised by a local football club, and quickly grew until it was taken over by event specialist MECC. "Top quality and great presentation are important to us," said exhibition manager and Porsche fan Erik Panis. "Every year we have a special display with the help of an expert team. The Louwman Museum is very supportive and this year sent the Talbot-Lago Grand Sport.

"We also run a show in Brussels, where we're planning an Elva/McLaren tribute display. The season here neatly starts with InterClassics in Masstricht and closes at the Expo in Brussels in November, so it's a great social gathering. The market is changing and we try to embrace younger cars, but always the best examples."

Over the four days 35,000 enthusiasts packed the West Hall, including many from the UK who relish the diversions of the city and great local food.









'The Dutch event started back in 1994, when it was organised by a local football club, and quickly grew until it was taken over by MECC'



Group 4 Fiat 124 Abarth Spider and streamlined Fiat 1100S Mille Miglia



Italian cars feature strongly at InterClassics, and you'll be hard pushed to find a more diverse and spectacular group than with Koen Heuts of Speed 8 Classics. As well as a very original Monteverdi 375L High Speed and a high-spec Iso Fidia in shocking Viola Borgogne, Heuts' stand also featured a Group 4 De Tomaso Pantera, one of just 12 built. "First owned by Ford, it was used for experimental work before being sold to Trans-Am racer Warren Tope," said Heuts. "I seem to be specialising in Italian classics with American engines! Panteras have long been undervalued. I've recently sold two, one to Moscow and another to the US. The market now is all about quality cars with reasonable prices. This is one of the best indoor shows and I've been displaying here since 1995."

As the Fidia confirmed, Heuts also has a thing about special hues: "The car was ordered new in Belgium and when I discovered the original colour, I had to repaint it. My painter kept ringing me to confirm I was sure! I also once had the ex-Rowan Atkinson Audi A8, in burgundy with pink trim."

You can always guarantee that Roy Bolks of Potomac Classics will have something different in stock, and among the novelties in his Maastricht display were a 1969 William Farmer, a model that was briefly imported to the UK by Crayford, and a '68 Ferves Ranger, one of 600 built. "It's the Ferrari of beach cars," said Bolks. "I also have a thing about Amphicars, with a separate business restoring them. My interest started with a friend's military collection. For several years we had the only Douglas A-26 Invader in Europe. Flying over the Normandy beaches during the D-Day celebrations was special."

Among the masses of Jaguars and Porsches, there were still plenty of more intriguing machines to be found. Attracting many bemused enthusiasts was a mystery Austin-Healey 100 BN1 with novel coupé bodywork called the Ward Special. The car had spent most of its life racing in Australia with a Maserati A6GCS barchetta-style body, but in 1968 it was rebuilt as a road car with fastback style; it was on offer for €59,000.

The Netherlands has a rich connection with Alfa Romeo, but few models are as rare as the 1939 6C-2500 on display with sevenseater, three-light bodywork. The stately limousine was first owned by the Medici family and later Princess Laura Ruspoli in Rome, before the black Alfa became a film star. It appeared in 80 movies including Malèna with Monica Bellucci and Federico Fellini's Intervista.



Koen Heuts with rare Iso Fidia finished in unusual and very period colour Viola Borgogne

MICK WALSH'S MAASTRICHT STAR CARS



HOT-HATCH SUPERCAR

Swiss designer Franco Sbarro created many one-off Ferrari-based specials, none wilder than the Super Eight that made its debut at the 1984 Geneva Salon and was one of the highlights of the Speed 8 Classics stand. "It's based on a 308GTB, and everything about the car is unique," said Koen Heuts, who has had several Sbarro creations. "All of the bodywork was specially made, and the build quality is very high. It has the same wheelbase as a GTB but is lighter. When you start it up the noise is pure 308, and it feels very fast. I bought it direct from the Sbarro museum when it closed, and would love to keep it." The price-tag was €95,000, but just imagine turning up at Ferrari events in this super-hatch!



CONCOURS FIAT ESTATE

A talking point for many was the magnificent two-owner Fiat 2300 Familiare that took the Best of Show trophy. Recently acquired by Italian parts specialist Martin Willems, the two-tone estate had undergone a €100,000 restoration. "It was part of the private collection of a Fiat dealer who recently died," said Willems. "He bought the car new and drove it until 1969. It still has a tag for its 1969 service at 57,200km – over the past 50 years it's done just 2000km. The car was meticulously rebuilt but many features, including the interior, are original. The engine is smooth, with lots of torque. Fiat and Lancia are my passion. I love taking my Aurelia on the Sliding Pillar Rally, but for fun nothing matches my 124 Abarth." **GOODING & COMPANY PRESENTS**

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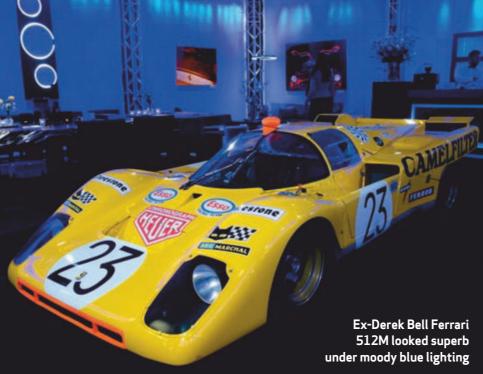
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INTERCLASSICS MAASTRICHT 2020







The oldest car at the show was a wonderfully patinated Stanley Steamer with pre-war car specialist Jack Braam Ruben, which took the trophy for Best Early Car. "We plan to take it to 'The Ice' concours in San Moritz," said Philippe Mulders of Fine Automobiles. "We're going to wrap the tyres with rope for extra grip and I've just bought some old skis to go on the back. Everyone is worried that the Steamer will melt the ice!"

Other awards went to a very original Avanti R2 with optional supercharger and a mint BMW 2002 turbo, the latter on offer for €115,000 with Albion Motorcars.

Younger cars for sale included a 200mph 1997 Ascari Ecosse with 4-litre BMW power, one of just 17 built before Dutch racer Klaas Zwart stopped production of the Lee Noble-designed supercar. It was stylishly presented in British Racing Green with just 12,577km, plus the deal included original body moulds and a factory trailer.

With the main halls dedicated to curated displays and dealers, the car clubs are now in a separate room on the first floor. Two of them really stood out, headed by the Studebaker-Packard Club Nederland with a stylish American diner-inspired display. "Studebakers have a special connection with us because they were assembled here during the '50s and '60s, including the Hawk Champion on our stand," said Marius Brouwer. "We have about 70 cars in the club and this year we're coming to Cambridge for our European Rally. We're looking forward to visiting Duxford and doing some punting."

There might only be seven cars in the Adler Club Nederland, but its celebration of the marque's 120th anniversary was impressive, with four cars including a Trumpf 1.7AV with Ambi-Budd sedan bodywork and Art Deco-style seats. "I love their individual design and style," said Wim Sijbers, who has a Karmann-bodied Trumpf cabriolet and an Adler bicycle. "Everything they made was great quality, and they go so well with front-drive and independent suspension."

Of the racing cars, the most spectacular was the Ferrari 512M chassis 1030, its yellow race colours dramatically highlighted by moody nightclub-style lighting. The 512 made its debut locally at Spa in the 1970 1000kms, with Derek Bell co-driving alongside its Belgian owner Hugues de Fierlant. The car has strong links with C C S C, too, first with senior contributor Alain de Cadenet, who raced it at Le Mans and Watkins Glen, then with former track tester Willie Green, who drove it to an impressive second in the 1972 Interserie Super Sports 200 at Silverstone.



DUTCH GP WINNER'S FERRARI

The first Ferrari sold in The Netherlands was a gorgeous 1952 212 Inter with a coupé body by Ghia. Ordered new by Dutch Grand Prix winner Eddie Hertzberger, the exotic 212 was used as a daily road car as well as competing at Zandvoort. Hertzberger was an early Dutch collector and owned a Bentley 'Blower' and an MG K3. The Inter was eventually sold in 1966 to America, where a Chevy V8 replaced its V12, but Hertzberger's son Anthony, encouraged by vivid childhood memories of the Ferrari, tracked down chassis 0225 in the USA in 2013 and managed to buy it back. Now beautifully restored, and reunited with its original motor, the 212 carries his father's original registration number, PD 88 78.



TONY LAGO'S SHOW SENSATION

Any number of the spectacular coachbuilt greats displayed in the special 'Forgotten Classics' feature could have been the star of the show, but to see the sleek, two-tone blue 1948 Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport displayed alongside a compact 1954 Moretti 750 GS was inspired positioning. One of just 36 of the exotic Grand Sports built, this flamboyant, Saoutchik-bodied coupé was loaned from the superb Louwman Museum in The Hague. Fitted with a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre engine of the type that powered the firm to 1950 Le Mans and several Grand Prix victories, the exclusive Grand Sport was the first 'supercar' of the post-war era, and there will be a special class at the Pebble Beach concours in August.



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SWISSVAX INTERNATIONAL



Brooklands' annual
1 January meet was
as popular as ever.
Below: Escort adds a
dash of colour to the
Surrey spectacular



OWNERS OPEN 2020 IN UNISON

One of the busiest days of the classic car calendar is also the first, as owners start the way they intend to go on and gather all over the country on New Year's Day.

Brooklands is perhaps the UK's biggest, as a staggering variety descends on the historic venue. More than 1250 cars covering over a century of motoring blanketed the site and its famous banking this year. Among the oldest was a 1909 Mercedes Simplex Type 4 Speedster, a veteran of the Traversée de Paris, while Fords from both sides of the Atlantic were plentiful, with the modified Americana a typical draw.

Just as packed was the town of Stony Stratford, near Milton Keynes, for the 11th running of its Vintage festival. Classic variety on two, three and four wheels lined the streets, not least the multi-coloured Fords nose-to-tail down the High Street. Awards handed out included the farthest driven, which was claimed by a 1928 Lea-Francis Model 28 from Birmingham; the oldest, a 1902 Gladiator 'KKK

Katie'; and the Take Home choice that went to a Bugatti Type 37 with a 35B engine. A minute's noise was held in remembrance of Ron Carey, who died in an accident during 2019's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, and more than £5000 was raised for Willen Hospice.

Fundraising forms part of many New Year's Day events, not least at The Classic Motor Hub's gathering at its base in Bibury, Gloucestershire. Katie's Nursing Home was the beneficiary, and the glamorous set of modern sports cars, supercars and pristine classics helped raise £2071.

The Yeovil Car Club brought colour to a gloomy day at Haselbury Mill in Crewkerne, too,



Cheerfully 'Moking' through the UK's capital as part of the famous New Year's Day Parade





Ringing in 2020 with vintage, classic and modern at The Classic Motor Hub's gathering

with proceeds going to the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance.

One place where classic car meetings can be tricky is central London, but the Mini Moke Club's appearance in the New Year's Day Parade no doubt brought a smile to the 600,000 attendees.

Bournemouth played host to around 150 classics for Classic Cars on the Prom, where an Austin-Healey claimed car of the day.





Far left: 1950s Fords combine. Left: 1928 Bugatti Type 37 scooped 11th Vintage Stony's biggest prize









UNEXCEPTIONALLY NEW Hagerty's Festival of the Unexceptional on 25 July has a new venue: Grimsthorpe Castle in Lincolnshire. Applications for unexceptional cars registered between 1966 and '96 open on

14 February. See bit.ly/2NWiFN8

ESCORT IS BOXING DAY BEST

Bryn and Kath Jackson's 1980 Ford Escort RS2000 Custom scooped the Best of Boxing Day prize at the Lakeland Motor Museum's 26 December Drive & Ride In Day. They were awarded a unique trophy created on site using a cutaway vintage engine.



GREATS GO TO GAYDON

The Historic Rally Car Register's annual Open Day, on 11 January at the British Motor Museum, drew around 2000 attendees. Stars in attendance for three forums included HRCR president Paddy Hopkirk (above) and co-drivers Stuart Turner and Willy Cave.



NSW'S BIG MINI MEETING

The Australian Motorlife Museum in New South Wales hosted its annual Minis in the Gong on 19 January, where Marl Pizzuto's 1973 Austin Mini Pick-up (above) was a double award-winner. Two local Clubman 'Sunshine' editions starred among the 67 attendees.

Series One re-conquers the world

The Land-Rover that completed the Oxford & Cambridge Far Eastern Expedition, better known as the First Overland Expedition, in 1955 has successfully retraced its wheeltracks, driving 19,000km from Singapore to London – a reversal of its original trip.

It was hoped that Tim Slessor, part of the inaugural crew, would complete the epic voyage, but illness restricted him to leading the welcome party in Folkestone on 14 December. More than 100 Land-Rovers, including a 2020 model in matching livery, gathered to greet filmmaker Alex Bescoby's team.

The eight-strong group, which included Slessor's grandson Nat George, crossed through Malaysia, Myanmar, the Himalayas, Tibet, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and mainland Europe on the way to the original trip's launch point: Park Lane in central London.

'Oxford', as the 1955 Series One is known, survived frozen plateaus, jungle and even shedding a wheel. Its restorer, Adam Bennett, offered remote assistance and dispatched parts when required, with onthe-go repairs led by mechanic/ doctor Dr Silverius Purba.

A documentary series and book of the adventure are expected to follow at some point in 2020.



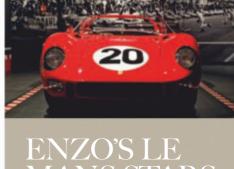
Capacity Scramble success

A diverse array of pre-1990 classics thrilled the sell-out crowd of more than 6500 enthusiasts that flocked to Bicester Heritage on 5 January for 2020's first Sunday Scramble.

A 1968 Tatra 603 II more commonly associated with the other side of the Iron Curtain went well with the historic military backdrop, while a 1984 Peugeot 205 T16 flew the Group B flag. Hardy enthusiasts from the Lotus Seven Club rumbled in with their roofs down, a feat matched by a 1935 Austin Seven Pearl Cabriolet, which drove 35 miles through the chilly pre-dawn mist. Warmer were the cavernous hangars, where dozens of supercars sheltered.

Bicester's own Sports Purpose added to the atmosphere by laying on a free-to-attend talk with 2019 W Series Champion and Formula One development driver Jamie Chadwick. Mission Motorsport used the meet to launch its forcesthemed Morgan racers.

The Sunday Scramble was also an opportunity to sign up for the Bicester Heritage Volunteer Squadron, a group set up to support the site and its events. "All in all a flying start to 2020, one hundred years to the decade since the historic Technical Site was constructed as an exemplar RAF station," said a satisfied chief executive, Dan Geoghegan.



ENZO'S LE MANS STARS

Ferrari is celebrating 70 years of Le Mans success in a new showcase at its Maranello museum, from its first winner to 2019's class-clincher.

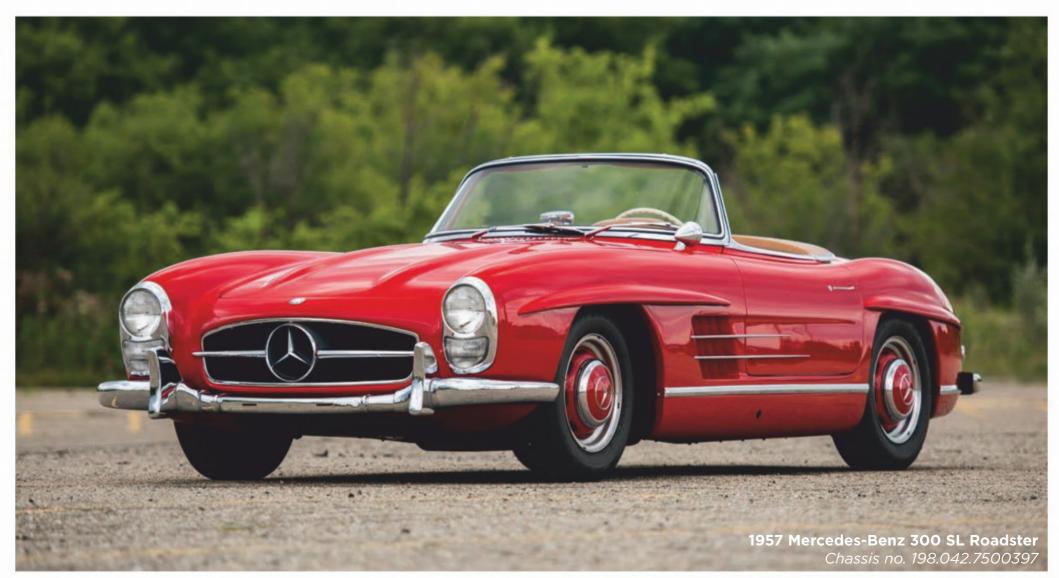
The story of the marque's 36 overall and category victories starts with a 166MM Barchetta Touring, a similar car to that in which Luigi Chinetti and Lord Selsdon claimed Ferrari's first Le Mans triumph at the 1949 edition (p124).

Nino Vaccarella and Jean Guichet's Le Mans-winning 275P from 1964 (above) is another star, while bringing the story bang up to date is the 488GTE in which Alessandro Pier Guidi, James Calado and Daniel Serra secured LMGTE Pro honours last June.

'Ferrari at 24 Heures du Mans' runs until 19 April 2020.



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Selling the crown jewels in the capital

A staggering collection of 16 hugely significant classics will cross the block at Somerset House on 1 April, as US-based auctioneer Gooding & Co hosts a sale outside America for the first time.

The 'Passion of a Lifetime' lot list comprises some of the most desirable models ever created from top European marques Aston Martin, Bentley, Bugatti, Lancia, Lamborghini, Rolls-Royce and Vauxhall, with a total estimated value in excess of £45m.

Headlining the London sale is the ex-King Leopold 1934 Bugatti Type 59 Sports (C&SC, November '08). Driven by such luminaries as Robert Benoist, Louis Chiron and Piero Taruffi, it contested numerous Grands Prix before being sold to King Leopold III of Belgium. It is expected to fetch more than £10,000,000.

The Type 59 is the centrepiece of a trio of pre-war GP Bugattis that also includes a 1937 Type 57S Atalante (C&SC, November '16) – one of just 17 examples constructed with Jean Bugatti's striking coachwork – and a wonderfully preserved and unrestored 1928 Type 35C (C&SC, March '02). The cars are expected to sell for in excess of £7m and £3m, respectively.

The Aston Martins are led by a unique Peony Red 1961 DB4GT Zagato that is estimated to fetch £7-9m. A 1955 DB3S from David McKay and Tony Gaze's Kangaroo Stable race team, famed for setting an Australian Land Speed Record

in 1957, is expected to make £3-4m, with an earlier 1935 Ulster that was delivered new to Prince Bira slated to bring £1,600,000-2,200,000.

Other notable cars from the sale include a 1971 Lamborghini Miura SV Speciale featuring experimental dry-sump lubrication and ZF differential (*C&SC*, September '09, estimate £1,600,000-2,000,000); one of five 1952 Bentley R-type Continental fastbacks built for Briggs Cunningham's crew chief Alfred Momo (£1,500,000-2,000,000); a 1919 Rolls-Royce 40/50HP Silver Ghost Alpine Eagle (£1,000,000-1,400,000); and a 1924 Vauxhall 30-98 OE-type Wensum (£800,000-1,200,000).



From top: unique Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato; Bugatti Type 57S Atalante; drysump Lamborghini Miura SV Speciale



Obituaries



JOY RAINEY 1952-2020

The remarkable Joy Rainey died in January, aged 67. Born in Geelong, Australia, she inherited the motorsport bug from her father, three-time national F3 champion Murray,

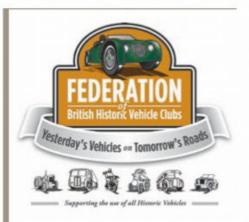
and despite achondroplasia (restricted growth) she was a multiple winner in karts. The family relocated to the UK in the '60s and Rainey was the ladies' record holder at Shelsley Walsh for 22 years, plus conquered the 2004 London-Sydney Marathon in a 1970 Morris Minor with her partner, Trevor Hulks. Following Hulks' death, in 2013 she embarked on a US coast-to-coast charity epic aboard a 1904 Curved Dash Oldsmobile in his memory, one of her many fundraising efforts.



DOUGLAS JAMIESON 1953-2019

Industry pioneer and former Coys chairman Douglas Jamieson died on 28 December following a short illness. He was 66 years of age.

The son of a farmer, he moved to London to become a chef and detailed cars in his spare time. Spotting the change in perception of old cars and the rapidly increasing demand, he became a driving force in the classic world and with Coys launched the careers of many leading industry figures. He started the Coys Historic Festival, and pushed auctions towards today's glamorous events. "His funeral was a gathering of tribes," said Coys chairman Chris Routledge.



Federation update

The Federation has extended the scope of its activities to include archiving and is pleased to have appointed Andy Bye to lead the project. He is one of the trustees of the Rootes Archive Centre Trust and has provided a safe, freehold home for all manner of Hillman, Humber, Sunbeam, Singer and Talbot material.

Our objectives include creating a handbook outlining best practice for managing archives, such as cataloguing and storage options, and in the longer term creating a central database of archivists.



Behind the scenes of the British Motor Museum's vast press material archive

Many organisations are already at an advanced stage of this process, but our focus is supporting the UK's clubs.

What type of material is worth saving? Original production drawings are invaluable and can be used to ensure that quality components can be accurately remanufactured. Build records are highly sought-after, and within the Rolls-Royce community, for example, provide insight into the creation of each vehicle. Marque artefacts are a much broader topic – signage, awards, cutaway models – and the British Motor Museum has recently unveiled 'The Art of Selling', a unique collection of sales and press material originating from British Leyland, both at home and abroad.



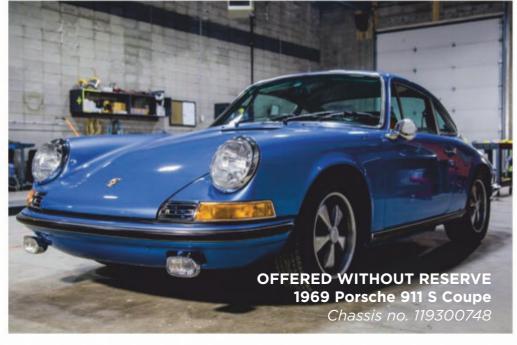
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FEBRUARY

5-9 Rétromobile Superb Paris show at Porte de Versailles covers everything from tanks to '90s youngtimers www.retromobile.com

7-9 Boca Raton Concours d'Elegance Charity concours marks Duesenberg's Model A centenary. Florida, USA www.bocaratonconcours.com

8-9 Leadfoot Festival Historic racing in Hahei, New Zealand 0064 7866 3120; www.leadfootfestival.com

8-9 Great Western Classic Car Show Somerset bash at The Royal Bath & West Showground 01507 529529; gwa.bristolclassiccarshows.com

9 The International MG & Triumph **Spares Day** With dedicated classic parking. Stoneleigh Park, Warks mgandtriumphsparesday.co.uk

15-5/3 Southern Cross Safari Enduro rally for pre-'76 cars across 3600km of Kenya and Tanzania 0113 360 8961; rallytheglobe.com

15 The Pomeroy Trophy Entertaining tests at Silverstone www.vscc.co.uk

15-16 21 Gun Salute International Rally and Concours d'Elegance

Return of event featuring 125 handpicked classics. Gurugram, India 0091 7042796192; 21 gunsaluterally.com

16 Winter Motoring Breakfast At Brooklands, Surrey 01932 857381; brooklandsmuseum.com

16 Miami Concours Promises 'the most significant post-war automobiles ever produced'. Florida, USA www.miamiconcours.com

20-23 The London Classic Car Show See Pick of the month

21-23 Race Retro See Pick of the month

21-23 ClassicMadrid Clubs, dealers, marque displays, a concours and more at this excellent Spanish show. Madrid, Spain 0034 912 799 971; salonclassicmadrid.com

23 8th Annual Enzo Ferrari Tribute Featuring an F40 celebration and

more. Los Angeles, USA 001 323 964 6331; www.petersen.org/events

23 Morris Minor Show At the Museum of Transport in Manchester 0161 205 2122; www.gmts.co.uk

27-1/3 Sebring Vintage Classic Historic racing at the iconic airfield circuit in Florida, USA 001 888 965 7872; svra.com

27-1/3 Retro Classics Featuring Gulf Heritage, Voisin and BMW displays. Stuttgart, Germany 0049 711 185 600; www.retro-classics.de

29 The Ice - The International Concours of Elegance St Moritz

40-car concours in stunning lakeside setting. St Moritz, Switzerland theicestmoritz.ch

MARCH

1 'Normous Newark Autojumble Near Newark, Notts 01507 529430; www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

1 Goodwood Breakfast Club: **Vee-Power Sunday** Anything with a 'V' engine welcome. Goodwood, West Sussex 01243 755055; www.goodwood.com

5-8 Amelia Island Concours **d'Elegance** See Pick of the month

6-8 Antwerp Classic Salon Abarth takes centre stage at this Belgian show featuring clubs, displays and a concours 01932 351640; www.antwerpclassicsalon.be

14-15 British Cars and Lifestyle

First post-Brexit running of this Britain-focused show in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch 0031 073 523 3301; www.britishbest.nl

20-22 Avignon Motor Festival One of the biggest shows in France, with 3000 cars and 500 dealers 0033 490 83 27 29; www.avignonmotor-festival.com

For full event listings, visit www.classicandsportscar.com/calendar

Pick of the month February



THE LONDON CLASSIC CAR SHOW 20-23 FEBRUARY

The capital's premier indoor show gets a new home for 2020, taking up residence in the wonderful Victorian splendour of the London Olympia. There's a lot more to look forward to than just the fresh venue, though: the 'Car Stories' feature will showcase the likes of the Maserati 250F and Porsche 962C, and there will be displays to mark the Range Rover's 50th and Audi quattro's 40th birthdays. Plus, with more than 500 cars available to buy, you might even come home with a nice new toy. www.thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk

RACE RETRO 21-23 FEBRUARY

Formula One will be to the fore at this year's Race Retro, as the historic motorsport extravaganza celebrates 70 years of F1. 'The Greatest Grid' will feature groundbreaking F1 cars, as well as the machines driven to victory by iconic drivers – so expect plenty of McLarens, Ferraris and Williams. Other treats on offer at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, will include up to 250 exhibitors, a Silverstone Auctions sale and, of course, the unmissable Group B cars on the Live Rally Stage. 08712 301088; www.raceretro.com



Looking ahead

AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE 5-8 MARCH

With its beachside location and history of showcasing great cars, Florida's Amelia Island is always a favourite of ours – and its 25thanniversary edition promises to be something special. American motorsport legend Roger Penske will be the honoree and there will be a class for Team Penske Indy 500 winners, while the cars of Sergio Scaglietti and Harley Earl will also form what should be some captivating displays. 001 904 636 0027; www.ameliaconcours.org



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BIG BENZ WINS IN AUSTRIA

It was three Planai-Classic wins on the bounce for father-and-son crew Alexander and Florian Deopito from 3-5 January. After covering 155 miles through the Austrian Schladming-Dachstein region, including 30 regularities, the defending champions in their Mercedes-Benz 350SLC absorbed the pressure from the hardcharging Günter Schwarzbauer

and Erich Hemmelmayer (Datsun 240Z) to secure their hat-trick.

Schwarzbauer/Hemmelmayer were on a mission to retake the lead they held at the end of day two, but relinquished it after the regularity at the horsetrack in Gröbming and the Planai mountain challenge. The chasing pair narrowed the gap to just 48 points before the final the Deopitos dominating the last test at Schladming to seal victory.

Third was claimed by Hansi Mlcoch and Martin Laaha (Volvo 121), who narrowly beat Fritz and Karin Müller (Porsche 914/6) to the final podium spot. Meanwhile, Alexander Haller and Lukas Lechler steered the rally's oldest entry, a 1936 Riley 12/4 Special,



TRIAL TRIO

History was made at the Plum Pudding sporting trial on 29 December in Hampshire, when there was a three-way tie in the Post Historic class.

It was tight from the off, with Steve Courts (Facksimile), Mark Howse (Impunity), Andy Gowen (Facksimile) and Dave Oliver (Facksimile, above) level on zero after one lap. Incredibly, neither Courts, Howse nor Oliver dropped a mark all day.

Cannons led in Historic after lap one, with Stephen Barnes two marks ahead of David Methley. Barnes hung on for a class win, despite a late charge from Matt Johnston (Cannon).

CHARLIE WOODING





Paddock profile **MIGUEL MORAIS DO VALLE**



Car 1972 Alfa Romeo 2000 Berlina **Series** HRDC Classic Alfa Challenge

"I came to classic racing late in life, 10 years ago after a friend introduced me to it, having previously done off-road 'bike racing. I enjoy long-distance endurance contests the best my dream is to do the Spa Six Hours in my Berlina. I've always been an Alfa fan, and with the Historic Racing Drivers' Club's Classic Alfa Challenge running its first full season in 2019, I had to get involved. It's great fun, and the standards of driving and car preparation are very high."



TIN-TOPS DO BATTLE

The Sixties Touring Car Challenge is a new Motor Racing Legends grid for 2020, set to make its debut at the Donington Historic Festival from 1-3 May. It will welcome cars from the 1966-'69 European Touring Car Championship era. See motorracinglegends.com



HSCC REMEMBERS RUSSELL

This year's Historic Sports Car Club Formula Junior championship will kick off on 4-5 April with the Jim Russell Trophy at Snetterton. The late Russell began his racing career at the Norfolk circuit and, using Juniors, later established his racing drivers' school there.

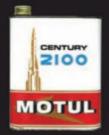
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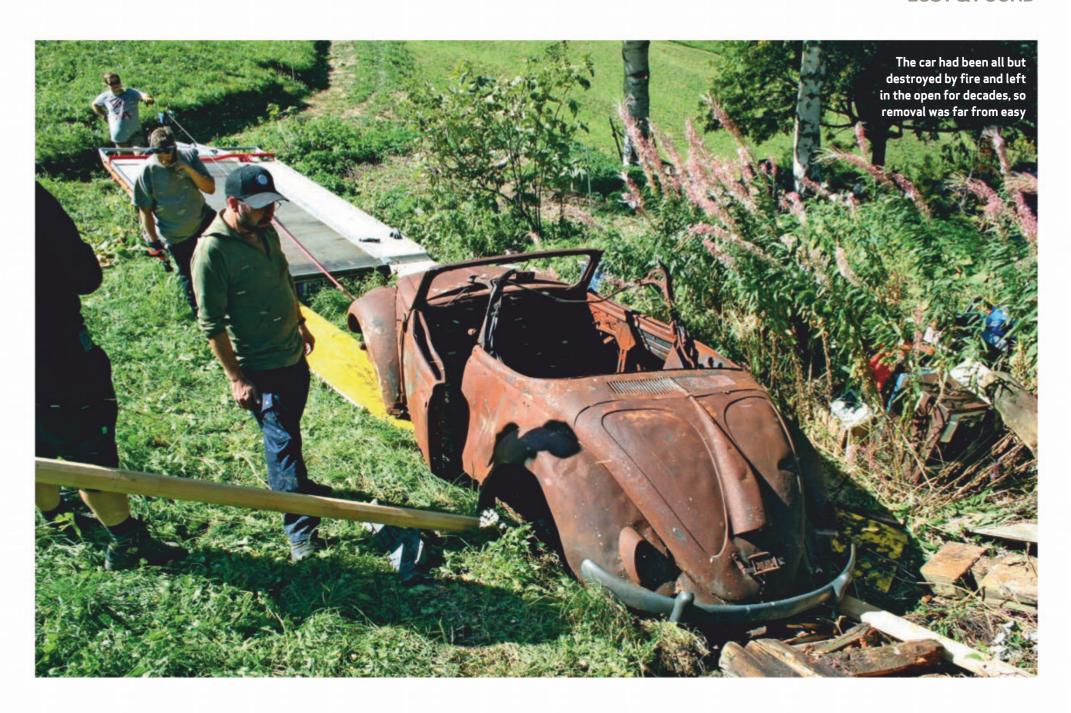
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VOLKSWAGEN RARITY RESURFACES

Most enthusiasts are familiar with the Karmann-built Volkswagen Beetle Cabriolet, but less well known is the two-seater Hebmüller Cabriolet. This pretty roadster was commissioned by VW and built by coachbuilder Joseph Hebmüller of Wuppertal, Germany.

Originally, plans were made to build 2000 of the two-seaters, but a fire hit the plant and eventually just 696 examples left the coachbuilder between 1949 and 1952. Around 100 survivors are known, and they remain among the most desirable Beetles of all to collectors.

When VW enthusiast Björn Schewe heard of a car that was previously unknown to the Hebmüller Registry, he was eager to find out more. It turned out that a Swiss owner had brought his Hebmüller in to a local garage for repair many years earlier, but

"We contacted the local community and the mayor himself was kind enough to get in touch with the heir of the car's previous owner"

unfortunately there was a fire in the workshop and the roadster was nearly destroyed. The burnt-out car was placed outside in a farmyard and when the owner died, some 15 years ago, the rare Volkswagen was all but forgotten.

"Last summer, a hiker came across the car by accident and posted a photo of it on a walking forum, where it was seen and sent to me," says Schewe. "My friend Christian Grundmann contacted the local community of the Swiss village, and the mayor himself was kind enough to help. He managed

to get in touch with the heir of the Hebmüller's previous owner, who lives in Germany."

Soon after that a deal was struck and the purchase was completed. But, due to the free accessibility of the car on an uninhabited farm, collecting it had to be organised quickly. Schewe and Grundmann promptly set off for Switzerland in order to salvage their prize. "Initially, we had intended to leave the roadster in its 'as discovered' condition," says Schewe, "but a restoration may still be possible despite the fire damage."





Left and above: the fire-damaged two-seater Hebmüller rarity as found in a Swiss village

LOST & FOUND COMPILED BY MICHAEL WARE





1938 Sunbeam-Talbot is partially stripped



New running boards were made and fitted

Stalled Sunbeam rebuild back on

Upon his retirement, HGV fitter David Robinson moved from the London area to Derbyshire, built himself a good-sized workshop and began looking for a project. After initially considering a Volvo Amazon because he had owned one in the past, he came across the stalled restoration of a 1948 2-litre Sunbeam-Talbot saloon in Devon.

The seller had started working on a rebuild in 1975, but got no further than stripping it down. He had sent the front wings away for blasting, but when the company doing the job suddenly folded there was a panic to get them back.

"The car had been kept under cover for 30 years or more," says Robinson. "The body and the interior seemed to be intact, but a lot of parts were in boxes and some spares were included. The engine was not running, but turned over, and although it clearly needed a lot of work I suppose it was love

'The Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Register quickly informed him that it was not built in 1946, as claimed by the DVLA logbook, but 1948'

at first sight, so a deal was struck."

He joined the Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Register, which quickly informed him that the car was not built in 1946, as claimed by the DVLA on the logbook, but in 1948, when it was registered CAN 886 in Essex and delivered new to an H Aldenhoven in Loughton.

No other owners' identities are recorded, except that of Miss Mary Peter of Bodmin, Cornwall, whose name appears on the parts-book cover, and who it is believed sold the car to its previous owner.

Robinson hopes to complete the rebuild within the next two years.

Look familiar?

Want to track down a lost love or looking for history on your current classic? Send details and pictures to the p10 address or email your requests to alastair.clements@haymarket.com



WHERE IS DAD'S JAG?

Rich Washer is looking for his dad's Jaguar E-type. Originally BJN 438K, the car was OJC 160 when sold by Brightwells in 2015. "The Jag was six months old when Dad bought it in Southend-on-Sea," says Washer. "He sold up in 1974. It was bought new by a Dr Moore in Heathfield." Email bmw3litrecsl@gmail.com



S2 HISTORY SEARCH

Ian Smith is researching the past of his Jaguar E-type, DWD 389K. "It was registered to JT Thorpe, a Warwickshire dealer, on 6 August 1970," he says. "and was originally Ascot Fawn. The last owner I can find was in Forest Gate in 2005, after which it went into storage." Email iansmith50@icloud.com



WEDDING BELLE

John Morris is keen to trace the Monteverdi 375L, BPH 5H, that he and his wife had as a wedding car in 1970. "It was a demonstrator at the dealer I worked for," he says, "and had previously been used on the TV show Hadley." Email johnlmorris@tiscali.co.uk



MICHAEL WARE Former curator of the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu. Send submissions to waremichael29@gmail.com

A RACING RARITY UP FOR GRABS

John Tojeiro was a chassis man and, though he did build some of his own cars, his main customers were individuals or racing teams that wanted a good chassis. Engines and bodywork were usually provided by the purchaser.

In his book Toj: John Tojeiro and his cars. Graham Gould does his best to write about each of the cars recognised as Tojeiros. Eleven or more makes of engine were fitted, ranging from JAP, MG, Lea-Francis and AJ Butterworth to Jaguar, Aston Martin and even Buick.

It would appear that seven examples were fitted with engines from Coventry Climax, and a car described as a '1958 Tojeiro 1100 Climax' was recently sold in the USA via Facebook Marketplace. No history was given, other than that it had come from a keeper who had owned it for many years, with the car in storage for much of that time.



The 1100cc Coventry Climax engine had been removed at some point and substituted for a BMC MG unit with twin SU carburettors. It doesn't tally with any in the book, but as Gould himself says: 'When it comes to defining the Tojeiros, even the most diligent researcher has to occasionally throw up his hands and throw in the towel!'







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Slumbering sports car is a unique prototype

After Reliant took over Bond in 1971, it had ideas for a four-wheeler sports car based on the Bond Bug. Ray Wiggins of Reliant asked BRM to design a new overhead-cam aluminium cylinder head to fit on the Reliant engine. The heads were made by Coventry Climax, and BRM modified six engines but the car was never produced.

BRM directed that these engines be destroyed and four were, but two remained in storage until 1982, when Brian Parker approached Reliant with the idea of running a Kitten on the 1983 Rallye Monte-Carlo. The publicity attracted



The one-off Bandit during its construction

'The engines remained in storage until 1982, when Reliant was approached with the idea to run a Kitten on the Rallye Monte-Carlo' Reliant to the idea and it gave him a new Kitten and the two engines; the car retired when a conrod came through the side of the engine.

In 1992, Mike Webster bought the rights to the Bond Bug and reproduced it in four-wheeled kit form as the WMC (Webster Motor Company) or Webster Bug. When exhibiting at the 1993 International Kit Car Show, he met a man who told him he had the Monte-Carlo Kitten, one of the BRM engines and the unique parts for a second, asking if he would be interested in buying them. Webster had been trying to purchase the Berkeley

Bandit prototype but it was not for sale, so he decided to make his own and call it a Bond Bandit – after all, it was Lawrie Bond who designed the original Berkeley cars.

The body was based on a slightly longer and wider Berkeley shell on a Bond chassis, and into this he fitted the Reliant-BRM engine and got to the stage where the car was running and driving but needed finishing. Then in 2002 he was able to buy the real Berkeley Bandit and work on the special stopped; the car and engine remain in storage – the second unit was built up and sold, last heard of in a Tempest.



Rodents have attacked the MkVI's interior

MkVI seeks its identity

In 2017, Terry Talbot imported a 1951 Bentley MkVI from the USA. The body is by HJ Mulliner, and the first seller was Rippon Bros of Huddersfield. There is no US history, and it was in storage for 45 years. "The logbook shows the registration as XHX 1," says Talbot. Further research revealed that the first owner also had Bentleys registered 1 XHX and XHY 1.

Talbot tried to register the car with its original number, but it was put on retention more than 30 years ago. The car is now for sale.

HORNET'S LONG-AWAITED REBUILD BEGINS

Bill Russell has previously been the secretary of the Wolseley Hornet Special Club of Australia, a country to which more than 70 Hornet Specials were exported new, most in chassis form for local bodies to be built on them. This model had an outstanding reputation on the road and in club competition. Russell owns an example with a rare coupé body, possibly by Callow and Sadler of Sydney, which was also known as the Premier Body Company.

Back in 1968, when he was at university, Russell spent a lot of time scanning old ads looking for a Hornet Special before he found his coupé. "It had languished for several years under an apple tree in Bentleigh, a Melbourne suburb," he says. "I bought it and have moved it unrestored through eight locations in 50 years. Earlier this year it came to the top of the priority list."

It has had its interior renewed, but Russell plans to leave the body alone: "It is a record of its past, with the scars of a collision with a Ford Customline in 1953 there to see."

The car's early history is not known, but it is thought to have come to Melbourne from Sydney in

1944. The owner was a member of the Light Car Club of Victoria, which had a leaning towards competition motoring. The following owner used it for daily transport before putting it out to grass in an orchard.



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Clockwise from left: innovative sleeve-valve Knight engine; plaid exterior design has been lost to rust; Willys-Knight appears largely complete and prime for restoration

'Plaidside' Willys-Knight rides out of the dark

The arrival of the Silent Knight car in 1905 didn't cause too much of a stir, and only some 50 were made in Chicago. It was, however, the first production car to feature the Knight sleeve-valve engine, which was more efficient and reliable than many of the poppet-valve engines that were around at the time.

Charles Yale Knight took his design to England and convinced Daimler to build his engines for its models. When John North Willys met Knight, he was so taken with the engine that he obtained a licence to build them in the USA.

The result was the Willys-Knight, which used sleeve-valve

'Amos Northup, who styled the model, incorporated a tartan or plaid design down the sides - hence the Plaidside name'

engines until 1932. One of the last made in 1930 was the Willys-Knight Plaidside Roadster, of which around 500 were made and 14 or so survive. Amos Northup, who styled the model, incorporated a tartan plaid design down the sides – hence the unusual name.

Alex Dragone from Orange, Connecticut, has recently bought a Plaidside Roadster that had been driven into a barn in 1954 and not touched again until now.

CLASSIC

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grabs!

"The owner was a hoarder type of collector," explains Dragone. "I think he had ideas of restoring the car, though. We had previously purchased some great original early 'brass-era' cars [1896-1915] out of another barn on the property."

A video of the car being removed from the barn shows a number of rusting hulks of early post-WW2 American cars, plenty of spares, lamps and assorted interestinglooking motoring memorabilia.

READER FIND OF THE MONTH

Send in a 200-word story plus a selection of photographs of your discoveries to the usual C&SC address or email alastair.clements@haymarket.com and you could win £100

Paul Hotvedt has unearthed a fascinating Delahaye that had been in storage for decades in a barn on the west coast of Norway. The Delahaye 135 Coupé des Alpes was first shown at the Paris Salon in 1935 with a Chapron four-seater convertible body, making it one of the first 135s by the coachbuilder when it was finished on 8 August 1935.

"The car has a six-cylinder engine with three carburettors and the Cotal four-speed electromagnetic gearbox," says Hotvedt. "In 1948 it was seen as being a bit old fashioned and was given a more aerodynamic body at Pennock, Den Haag. The car was then exported to Britain and offered as a 'new' car, having technically been restored by Delahaye. At that time the price-tag had grown by £1000 from when it was new in 1935 to a total of £2350."

The car remained in Britain until the early '70s, with the final registration number being

KYL 51, before it was exported to Denmark and owned by Erik Eriksen. The previous UK owner seems to have been an HTM Rees in Cardiff. It was later sold to Svend Draaby, who traded it before it appeared in Norway in 1982. "It moved to various locations in Norway until I bought it from an old farm," says Hotvedt. "The interior had been kept in a more friendly environment and they have now been reunited."

If you remember KYL 51, Hotvedt would love to hear from you. Email paul.hotvedt@gmail.com



The rare Delahaye 135 during its brief and elusive life in Britain



Awaiting restoration at its new home outside Oslo in Norway



SCOTLAND'S NORTH COAST 500

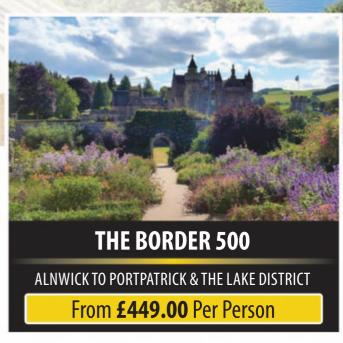
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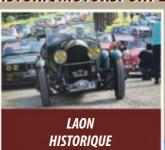
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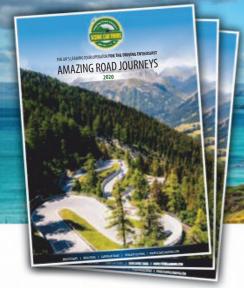


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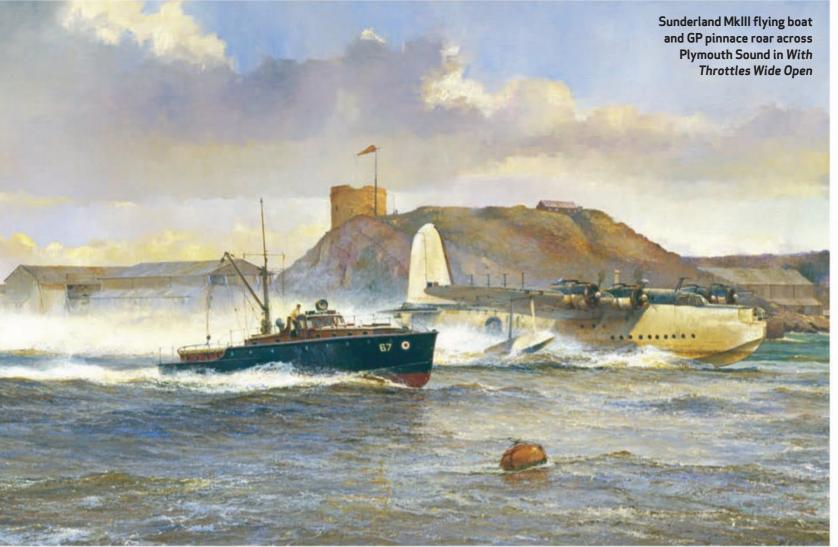
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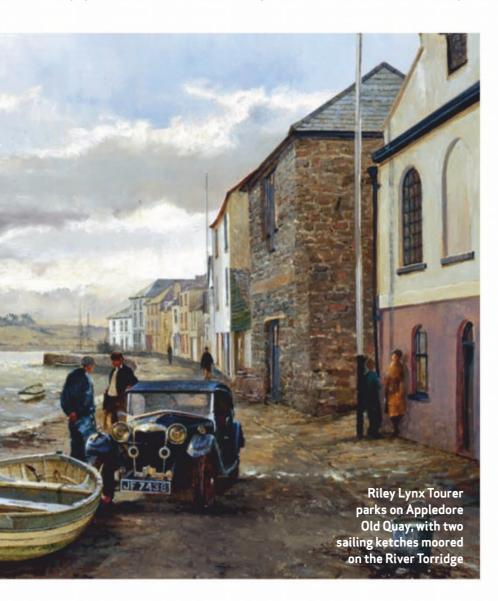




Ford delivery van crosses the Bideford Long Bridge while youngsters fish in the river



Lees always paints on location; this Bideford piece with Austin Sevens took 10 days



MOTORING ART

MICHAEL LEES

This former RAF pilot has swapped the joystick for a paintbrush

Be it a Riley parked peacefully on a quayside or a Supermarine Walrus trying to hook up with HMS Nigeria in a stormy North Sea, the paintings of Michael Lees have a compelling authenticity. From searching out veteran pilots for inspirational stories to painting on location in all weathers, he is dedicated to vividly capturing the moment. Although keen on art from an early age, Lees' burning desire to paint wasn't fulfilled until he left the RAF in '86, but he made up for lost time as commissions soon kept him busy.

Both of Lees' parents were artistic but, although he loved drawing and painting at school, an interest in aircraft led to his initial career choice. "With the Air Cadets, I started with gliders and had learnt to fly before I could drive," he recalls. "Cars were soon a parallel hobby and my first was a dismantled MG TA, on which I learnt a lot of restoring and running skills. When I joined the RAF in 1967 I needed something more practical, so bought a Mini Cooper and drove it all over the country."

The Mini was followed by a Swallow Doretti: "It came from a fellow serviceman and had been in an accident, in which it lost its windscreen. I added a couple of aeroscreens, which meant a hood was impossible to fit. When my girlfriend Gina endured open motoring without complaint I knew she was the one for me."

After the Doretti came a Lotus Seven: "I loved that car and still dream today of the fantastic fun it provided, but when I was based in Germany it just wasn't suitable for use on the *autobahn*. An MGB followed, but when we later grew into a young family my motoring had to be more practical."

Following a 20-year career with the RAF that created some fantastic memories of flying a wide range of aircraft - including a Consolidated Catalina 'waterbomber' at Goose Bay, Canada – Lees developed a yearning to become a painter.

Despite having sold a few works during his final years with the RAF, he was still apprehensive about supporting his family with his art: "Unbeknown to me, my wife Gina wrote to famous wildlife painter David Shepherd to ask his advice. Amazingly, he wrote back with a two-page letter, complimenting my work but insisting that the key was to paint from life."

That direction became Lees' philosophy, and as a result the natural lighting in his compositions has a special character. Be it setting up his easel and canvas on Bideford Bridge, where for a few days his artistic endeavours disrupted traffic, or chatting to retired ketch sailors in Appledore harbour, the experience of painting on location has been very rewarding. Working in all elements and through all seasons has had its moments, particularly when a dramatic storm developed in Clovelly: "I ended up helping locals with flood protection and when I came back my canvas had been washed downstream!"

Not one for major battles or heroic motorsport, Lees prefers more local scenes: "I like to feature the type of vehicles that would have been seen around these locations, and pre-war cars have real character - particularly Austin Sevens."

Following his wife's death in 2000, Lees stopped painting and worked on raising awareness of the health concerns from asbestos in old school buildings. Retirement has given him more time for his art, and the rebuild of Gina's old NG TC for his grandchildren. MW

See www.the-art-of-michael-lees.com or email michaellees1262@gmail.com

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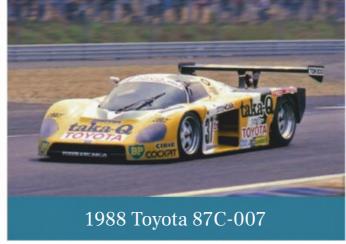
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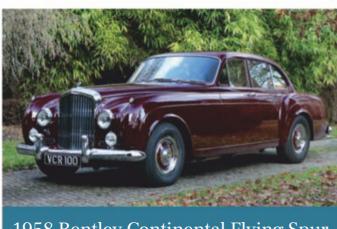
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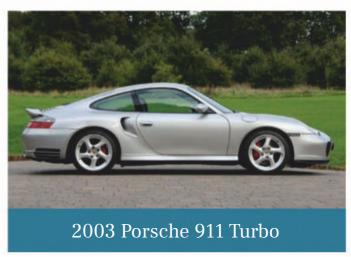
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Book of the month



'The authors have been on a decade-long mission to find every photograph taken of the Tipo 156, all beautifully reproduced in this hefty book'

SHARKNOSE V6

It's hard to believe today, but Enzo ordered these legendary Grand Prix Ferraris be broken up. Six decades on, interest in Maranello's first mid-engined racers has never been stronger. From Chris Rea's replica built for his 2001 film La Passione, via Jan Biekens' Tipo 156 recreation in Ecurie Francorchamps colours, to the fantastic pair instigated by Jason Wright (C&SC, April 2018), enthusiasts have witnessed the dream rebirth of these fabulous V6s.

Equally fanatical about the 'Sharknose' racers are the authors of this superb 432-pager. Jörg-Thomas Födisch and designer Rainer Rossbach have been on a decade-long mission to find every photograph taken of the Tipo 156, which form the core of the impressive publication. The majority is from the Bernard Cahier archive, which includes a wealth of period colour, all beautifully reproduced in the hefty square-format tome.

The book kicks off appropriately with a preface by Mauro Forghieri, who was appointed engineering director aged just 26 after the dismissal of Carlo Chiti. Continuing the Championship success of the dominant but tragic 1961 season was a daunting

> prospect for Forghieri, because few shared his view that the chassis lacked torsional stiffness – the poor results of '62 proved him right.



The chronological book begins with the Dino 246P and its four outings during the 1960 season, including the close Formula Two battle between Hans Herrmann's Porsche 718 and Wolfgang von Trips' Ferrari at Solitude. The aristocrat set a new lap record, hinting at how well prepared Maranello was for the new 1500cc GP formula.

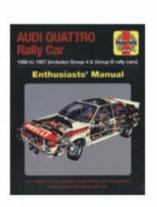
Spring testing at Modena opens the 1961 season, with Richie Ginther and Martino Severi captured by the local press. Here in February the iconic 'Sharknose' was unveiled, shaped by Medardo Fantuzzi's master craftsmen from Bologna, creators of almost every Maserati racing body.

Phil Hill's victorious Championship is vividly presented across 150 pages, starting with Monaco when the 'Sharknose' trio failed to catch Stirling Moss, the Presto pit board from team manager Romolo Tavoni coming too late to catch the Lotus 18.

Cahier's wonderful shots and additional archive material capture the pitlane and trackside atmosphere, right to the dark day at Monza when von Trips and Jim Clark tangled on the second lap on the entry to Curvetta. Enhancing the photography is a set of paintings by Michael and Graham Turner.

The troubled 1962 season is covered in equal depth, including non-Championship events, while extra chapters highlight the 'Sharknose'-style sports cars, the 246SP and the 196SP from 1961 and 1962. The final section covers the drivers and the team personnel with a glorious gallery of portraits. The extensive appendix features a full technical specification and in-depth results before the story behind the rebirth of the 'Sharknose' by enthusiasts Biekens and Wright.

Succinctly written, in both English and German, beautifully printed, and stylishly presented in a slipcase, all this superb book is missing is a CD of those magnificent V6 engine noises. MW €124.99 Jörg-Thomas Födisch and Rainer Rossbach, McKlein Publishing. ISBN 9783947156245



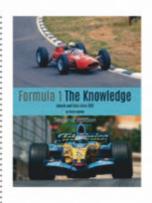
Grand Prix de France

Audi quattro Rally Car

A proper celebration of a rally great as it turns 40, this Haynes Enthusiasts' Manual is as much for fans as it is for owners. The Audi quattro's WRC

story is comprehensively covered, with driver profiles and appendices charting every victory, plus an in-depth anatomy of the car, buying and building tips and even specialist contacts. Evocatively illustrated, often capturing behindthe-scenes moments, it's a useful reference title and one for completists. **LP**

£25 Nick Garton, Haynes Publishing. ISBN 9781785212505

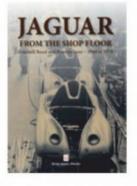


Formula 1: The Knowledge

Think of a question related to Formula One, and this fact-filled, 540-page beast of a book can likely answer it. The updated second edition

goes even further to impress the most stat-driven fan, with every conceivable piece of information presented in a wonderfully easy to follow format. Not confined to the obvious, many unique and unexpected stories emerge: how does a list of wildlife appearing on the track during a race or a list of kidnapped racing drivers sound? DC £55 David Hayhoe, Veloce Publishing.

ISBN 9781787112377



Jaguar: From the shop floor

This is a fascinating insight into the inner workings of Browns Lane and Foleshill Road, seen through the eyes of ex-Jaguar employee Brian Martin. Part history,

part autobiography, it covers his career with the company from out-of-school gopher in 1949 through to '78. His recollections and warm prose bring the factories to life, a window not only to the history of the marque, but also working life at the height of Britain's manufacturing industry. A truly engaging book. **GM**

£30 Brian James Martin, Veloce Publishing. ISBN 9781787112797





Classic Cars & Art de vivre



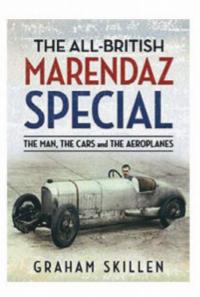
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Marendaz Special

From an initial interest in Marendaz aircraft through to buying an Anzani-powered Special, author Graham Skillen has been absorbed by the man behind them for half a century. Constant digging, including correspondence with – and various frustrated attempts to meet – the eccentric Marendaz, have resulted in this definitive history.

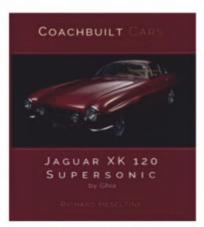
Skillen covers all aspects of DMK Marendaz's fascinating life: his WW1 service with the Royal Flying Corps, his work at Marseal Motors in Brixton and

the stylish 1930s cars made in Maidenhead. Just 86 of all types were built, and the book features an appendix of 33 survivors.

The competition history of the marque highlights Brooklands, trials and international sorties, plus Lord Howe, Kaye Don and Aileen Moss.

Marendaz returned to the aircraft business in '36, but in 1940 he was arrested for suspected spying. The case was eventually dropped but the experience damaged his character and he moved to South Africa to produce stationary engines. Finally returning to England in 1972, Marendaz developed a reputation as a thorny and troubled man.

The engrossing work is complemented by a wealth of photographs, memorabilia and drawings. Highly recommended. **MW** £25 Graham Skillen, Fonthill. ISBN 9781781557020



Jaguar XK120 Supersonic

Hot on the heels of its starring role in the January C & SC, now there's a book on the Jaguar XK120 Supersonic, one of the most beautiful Ghia designs.

As one of only three Jaguar-engined versions of the 19 built, dedicating a whole book to this single chassis was always going to be a challenge.

However, Richard Heseltine reflects on bigger topics such as the rise, fall and rise again of Ghia; revered engine maestro Virgilio Conrero; and the Jaguar XK120 chassis on which this Supersonic was built.

One of the most interesting chapters, though, is the profile of its enigmatic designer, Giovanni Savonuzzi. This fascinating character shunned publicity and fame, but was involved with numerous projects in Turin – not to mention the revered prototypes for Chrysler and Fiat.

This is clearly a passion subject for Heseltine. His detailed knowledge of the car and its intricate engineering details are explored in detail. **DC** £35 Richard Heseltine, Porter Press. ISBN 9781907085826



Claude Deane

A good tale is a good tale, regardless of its fame. Graeme Cocks has shared the story of Western Australian Claude Williams Deane: 'Businessman, yachtsman, musician – and most importantly an extraordinary pioneer of the motor age.' His was a name that Cocks had been unable to escape

whenever he researched the country's motoring history.

Set during the Aussie gold rush at the turn of the 20th century, this is a fascinating snapshot of Australia's own Wild West and the dawn of its motor industry. The story is almost Hollywood: ramshackle fortunes are made, orchestras played with, future American presidents encountered, plus rivalries, a 'Human X Ray' and dodgy herbal tablets – everything. Even crossing the outback, mid-summer, on a De Dion tricycle. And then Western Australia with an Oldsmobile.

The evocative design brings the remarkable, century-and-a-half-old photographs to life. The whole package is excellent. **JP** \$65AUD (£35) Graeme Cocks, Motoring Past. ISBN 9780987280855



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CMC, 1:18, £829.99

For its latest 1:18 supermodel, award-winning German specialist manufacturer CMC has produced a sensational 13in-long miniature masterpiece of the flagship Mercedes-Benz W100, better known as the 600. The standard of detail and finish is outrageous, with six opening doors, plus boot and bonnet, revealing many meticulous features.

Even the hubcaps are magnetised, and a special tool unscrews the wheelnuts. Other impressive details of this 1230-part beauty include rear curtains, extra folding seats and a cabin partition. Later this year additional versions will be offered featuring a sunroof and the Landaulet-style body.

1:18

1 IXO's Bruno Saby 1985 Rallye Monte-Carlo Peugeot 205 T16, £73.99 2 Cult's 1966 Fiat Dino Spider, £176.99

3 Norev's 1978 Porsche 911 (930) turbo, £79.99

4 TrueScale Miniatures' J Leonard 1968 Indianapolis 500 Lotus 56, £236.99

1:43

5 IXO's 1978 Hunsrück Rallye Ford Escort Mk2 RS1800, £37.99

6 Norev's 1956 Citroën 2CV Dagonet, £39.99 7 IXO's 1985 Totip Jolly Club Fiat 242 van, £42.99

8 IXO's 1987 Ford Sierra RS Cosworth, £24.99

9 Matrix's 1903 Spyker 60HP 4WD racer, £104.99

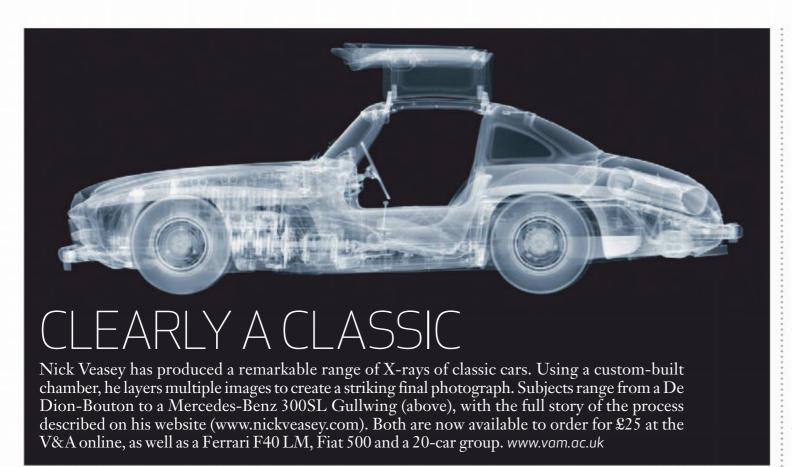
10 Matrix's 1930 Invicta S-type Low Chassis, £101.99 11 Neo's 1957 Ford Fairlane

500, £84.99

12 Matrix's 1948 Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport Saoutchik Cabriolet, £101.99

IX JOHY CLUBI

Edited by Mick Walsh. Unless stated, all items are available from Diecast Legends (08448 878888; www.diecastlegends.com); 10% discount for orders from C&SC readers quoting 'CS0320'



Peak road trip

The V&A is offering a range of stylish products in conjunction with the 'Cars: Accelerating the Modern World' exhibition, which remains open until 19 April, including an exclusive 'Road Trip' hat. Made from 100% dark-blue cotton with an embroidered front panel, the baseball cap is priced

at £18.50. A variety of Car-themed clothing is also available from the museum including tote bags, T-shirts and flat caps. Visit the V&A shop or see www.vam.ac.uk



Inspired by the pre-war motoring photographer Bill Brunell, artist Bill Smith has created a series of paintings for the Green Pebble publishing company. Smith, a former Royal College of Art student, has been fascinated by railways and motoring since childhood and they continue to feature in his work. Fourteen greetings card designs are available, including *Speed* Trial Thrills, Kitty Takes Flight, Hill Climbing, Bugatti in Full Flight and *The Ford.* Each design costs £2.82, and measures 150mm x 150mm. 01502710427; www.greenpebble.co.uk



In the fold

Designer Patrick Pasques has produced a fun series of 20 cut-out racing car templates, published by Promopress and costing £9.99. The printed illustrations are in colour or simply line drawings for colouring in, and require cutting, folding and gluing to assemble. Subjects include the Lamborghini Miura, Matra 670, R8 Gordini, Lancia Stratos and Ford Mustang. www.amazon.co.uk



New BMW LSD

PassionAutoFrance has launched a limited-slip diff for E21 and 2002 BMWs. Produced by 3J Driveline, it is solid and progressive with noise-reducing precision-cut gears, and fits most E21s without modification. 2002s and cars with 2002 casings need adaptor flanges (£385), plus modifications to the diff casing. Units start from £1050. www.passionautofrance.com

Tested this month

RYOBI R18B-0 CORDLESS BUFFER

Ryobi's 10in 18V buffer is a useful tool that can take the pain out of polishing or waxing your classic. Operating at 2500rpm with a random orbit motion that helps prevent troublesome swirl marks, the kit makes short work of treating large panels and produces an impressive shine compared with buffing by hand. The largediameter buffing pad can make it difficult to reach some areas, though. Priced at £99.95, the R18B-0 uses the firm's One+ battery system that is shared across its other cordless tool range; using a battery you already own will save you around £50. Its pricing is perilously close to entry-level dual-action polishers, though the Ryobi is still a great tool if your garage doesn't have a power hook-up available. GM www.ryobi.co.uk



THE LAST OPEN ROAD

The novels of Burt 'BS' Levy divide opinion, but we enjoy them – none more so than the original, The Last Open Road. Now there's an audio book in the style of a '50s radio play, with authentic car noises. If you like the book you'll love Buddy Palumbo et al being brought to life. Running to 20 hours, it's available as a flash drive (\$55) or 20-disc CD box set (\$65). **AC** www.lastopenroad.com





Metal sheets cut clean at home

Cutting sheet steel at home is much easier thanks to Laser Tools' new Sheet Metal Nibbler, which does away with the need for expensive pneumatic or slow hand tools. Instead it runs off any power drill simply using a chuck key. Featuring a lightweight aluminium body with composite handle, its smooth action should leave the surrounding metal unaffected and make straight lines and tight curves a breeze. The £102.88 tool is capable of cutting steel of up to 1mm thick, and stainless steel of up to 0.8mm thick. www.lasertools.co.uk

Get it straight

Balancing wheels needn't cost a fortune: Gunson has released a new £210.31 static wheel balancer to

> do it the old-fashioned way. Simply centre your wheel on the machined-aluminium cone and check the position of the guide bubble. All wheels, including wires, with a 38-101.6mm (1½-4in) centre drive can be balanced.

> > It is constructed with a stable castaluminium base and includes wells for weights.

www.gunson.co.uk



Flat-pack cars

FleursGifts offers an extensive range of classic-themed wooden construction kits. Laser-cut from 3mm birch ply, they are flat-packed and unpainted. Subjects include Morgan three-wheeler, Mini, Ford Escort, Lotus Seven, Land-Rover, Citroën 2CV and Chevrolet Bel Air. All are dispatched from the UK, and prices start from £12. www.etsy.com/uk/shop/fleursgifts

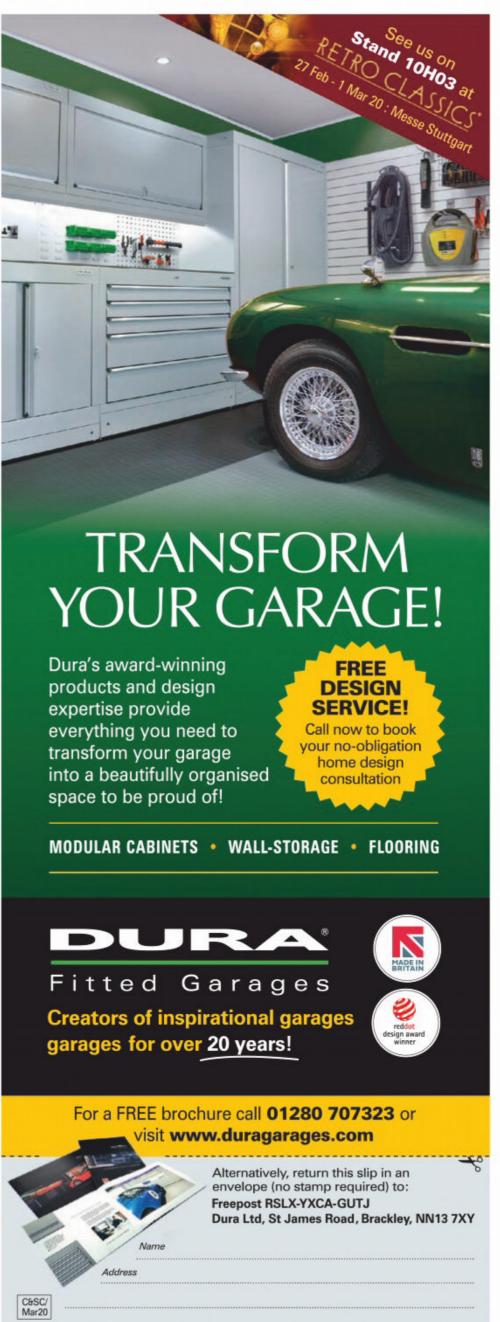


Among budget dashcams, Viofo's A119 V3 boasts an enviable spec that includes a 2in LCD display, Sony 5MP Starvis Sensor and 2560 x 1600px,

30fps recording, presented in a discreet package that sits tight against the windscreen. We found it guick and easy to install - there are so few buttons it's difficult to go wrong. The 140° wide-angle camera lens offers a great view of the road ahead, though the images captured could perhaps have been sharper; add the optional polarising lens filter to cut down on glare. The crash feature worked well, automatically saving the relevant section of video following a sudden jolt, as does the buffered parking mode - an unusual feature at this price. At just less than £100, the A119 V3 represents good value. GM www.viofo.com



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Mick ISH

here's nothing like kicking off the New Year with a beach walk, and the North Norfolk coast is the perfect escape. And any trip to Blakeney requires a visit to the grave of Sir Henry Birkin, the legendary 'Bentley Boy', double Le Mans winner and Brooklands Outer Circuit king. It's always heartening see Bentley 'Blower' miniatures lining his stone, to be found on the north side of the Church of St Nicholas.

Birkin had stipulated he be buried with his feet pointing to the sea, but the bishop insisted all graves be "kept in line". The congregation at his funeral in 1933 included Sir Malcolm Campbell and Earl Howe, who co-drove an Alfa Romeo 8C for Birkin's second win at Le Mans in 1931.

Birkin loved the area, and it became a happy retreat from his high-profile racing life. The short but dashing legend's enjoyment of the company of local fishermen, sailing and shooting was almost enough to overcome his stammer. Amazingly, this key mannerism was overlooked in Rowan Atkinson's portrayal in the 1995 television drama *Full Throttle*.

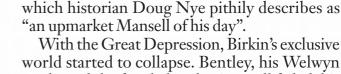
Birkin never lived at Blakeney – his country home was Shadwell Court, near Thetford – but he often stayed at The White Horse, spending his honeymoon there with Lady Audrey Latham. The story goes that Birkin hired a charabanc to take locals to Brooklands for the 1928 Six Hours Race, and they kept their ties on for three days for fear of not being able to tie them again.

Speed captivated the Birkin family, with tragic consequences: his brother Archie was killed testing for the 1927 Isle of Man TT. When their younger sister Ida died aged 22 of consumption she left her 30ft Megevet racing launch to 'Tim', as she nicknamed Henry. Its Sunbeam 'six' was apparently tuned by Louis Coatalen and capable of 30 knots, and inspired Birkin to attempt waterskiing along the Norfolk coast.

In a racing car, Birkin's character changed to a fearless show-off, and his ultra-competitive style didn't impress WO Bentley. "Tim's weaknesses were his love of playing to the gallery, and his complete ruthlessness with his cars," WO recalled. "I know of nobody who could tear up a piece of machinery so swiftly and completely."

Be it pushing the single-seater Blower No 1 to 137mph at Brooklands chasing John Cobb's LSR Delage V12 or passing Rudi Caracciola at 125mph on the Mulsanne at Le Mans, canvas exposed on his rear tyre, there was no doubting 'Fans adored Birkin's theatrical style, pithily described as "an upmarket Mansell of his day" by historian Doug Nye'

Below from top: Birkin walks back to the pits after crashing the 'Blower' in the rain at the 1929 Ards TT; Birkin's grave at St Nicholas Church



With the Great Depression, Birkin's exclusive world started to collapse. Bentley, his Welwyn works and the family lace business all failed, his patron Dorothy Paget withdrew her backing, and depression clouded his outlook when projects such as an all-British tractor, a slot-car game and a double-declutching unit all stalled. Criticism of Brooklands in his book Full Throttle resulted in legal action from the track, too.

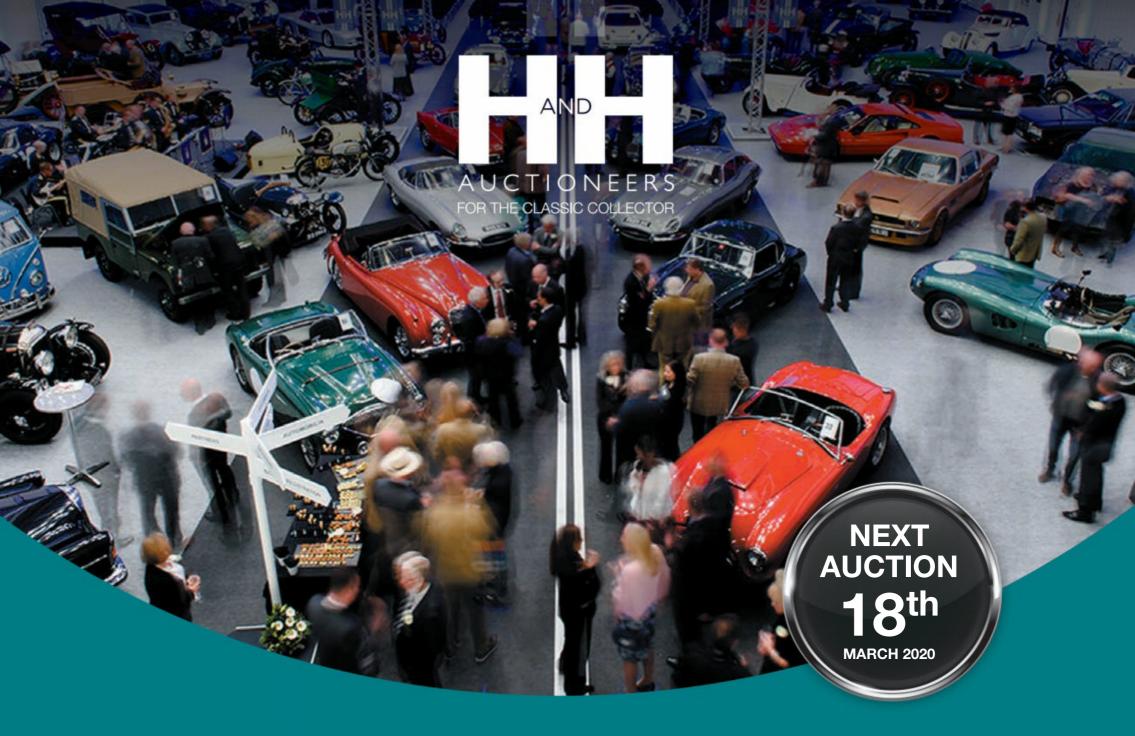
Birkin's courage. Fans adored his theatrical style,

Regardless, his friend Bernard Rubin funded a new Grand Prix Maserati 8C-3000, but that ended badly in the Tripoli GP on 7 May 1925. Suspicious pitstop chaos robbed him of victory, but burns to his arms on the exhaust led to fever and blood poisoning. After two transfusions and worrying temperatures, he died at Countess Nursing Home in London six weeks later. Reports stated the cause was septicaemia, but malarial poisoning stemming from a bout in Palestine during WW1 was more likely. The case dragged on after his death when Birkin's life insurer refuted liability due to a clause excluding motorsport, but it later paid £8500 plus costs.

Birkin certainly lived for speed. 'In a race, all my awkwardness disappears and I feel at home, as happy as a king,' he wrote. If you're passing through Blakeney, spare a moment to seek out his grave. Better still, track down *Full Throttle*.







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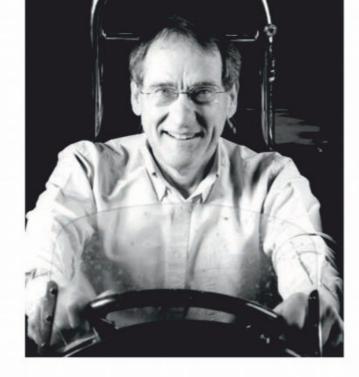






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Simon

ig down through the layers of British motorsport, and you'll find more real characters than exist anywhere in the entire self-important Formula One paddock. Here's just one example: James Augustus Tiller.

Jim is 85 years old, a retired art teacher who helps his petite wife Sheila run a cattery behind their cottage in Sussex. Sounds like a quiet life.

But he still races the Allard he has campaigned for the past 62 years. Its primitive chassis carries an 8.9-litre Chevy V8 developing 700bhp. Over the bumps on Brighton's Madeira Drive he has done a 9.9 secs standing quarter. He manhandles it around corners, too, and he secured a second place at Silverstone last season. And he has taken it to the Bonneville Salt Flats and reached a shade under 200mph.

Jim was a wild boy. Aged 15, after being repeatedly caught riding the unlicensed, uninsured 500cc Triumph he'd bought with the proceeds of a paper round, he was sent to a remand home and banned from driving until he was 21. When he was allowed to take his test it was in a 1935 Riley 12 saloon into which, to the examiner's astonishment, he'd inserted a warmed-over Mercury V8. Then he worked on a building site until he'd saved £265, which got him an Allard J2 with a broken gearbox.

That was in 1958, and he has the J2 still. Over six decades he has relentlessly modified and uprated it, with ever bigger engines, to its current outlandish specification. Sheila has regularly raced and hillclimbed it too, and she also ran it at Bonneville.

It still has its original split-axle front suspension and de Dion rear. On circuits Jim uses a hefty Muncie four-speed, and for straightline stuff a bulletproof T400 automatic. Linda, the charming lady who helps out at the cattery, has got very good at helping to change gearboxes. Jim runs 11in-wide front tyres and 15in-wide rears when racing and the body, much stretched to fit, still shows its Allard J2 origins. It's now bright orange, with 'The Old Fella' painted across the nose. Does this refer to the car or the driver? Maybe both.

For Bonneville the bodywork was dramatically changed: skinny exposed front wheels, one-inch ground clearance, faired-in rear wheels, sealed front air intake, plus monster rollcage and parachute as required by the rules. Says Jim: "Down the course you do about nine miles 'At a clocked 165mph The Old Fella went into a massive spin, continuing backwards in blinding rooster-tails of salt'

From below: Jim Tiller, a very young 85; with The Old Fella in the baking Bonneville desert after his brave 197mph run



before you have to pull the 'chute. The track is marked by posts at every mile, and the speed that counts is your best between any two. The salt is surprisingly slippery: moisture rises up beneath and it's almost like driving on packed snow."

To run straight, most Bonneville cars are built very long and carry a lot of ballast. The short, stubby Allard was much less predictable: "As the speed built up I found the car didn't respond to the steering and I was getting into a high-speed weave." At a clocked 165mph the inevitable happened: The Old Fella went into a massive 540° spin, continuing at scarcely diminished speed backwards in blinding rooster-tails of salt until it finally scrubbed off enough speed for him to get it stopped.

After removing the salt, which was everywhere, Jim thundered off again. The speed went up and up until, at 184mph this time, the Allard performed another terrifying spin.

Any ordinary mortal would have given up at that point. Not Jim. In search of directional stability he requisitioned, under cover of darkness, the tin sign hanging outside his motel and made it into a giant tail fin.

His goal of 200mph crept closer, but his final figure was just 197.3mph: so near and yet so far. It was a huge achievement with an ancient car, a tiny budget and a lot of brave beans. Brave beans for Sheila, too, who topped 150mph.

Then, back to the cattery and the quiet life.







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Martin BUCKLEY

ddie Cochran was just 21 when that infamous Ford Consul taxi spun and wrapped itself around a lamp post on Rowden Hill, Chippenham, 60 years ago this April. Clean-cut yet far from bland, Cochran was undoubtedly destined for great things: a guitar-wielding pin-up to rival James Dean, he wrote his own songs, pioneered overdubbing techniques and is widely referenced as the inspiration for a generation of '60s stars. More famous in the UK than his native US, Eddie was part of the Larry Parnes stable on this side of the Atlantic, touring with that whimsically rechristened coterie of English boy-rockers created by 'Mister Parnes Shillings and Pence'.

Rockers? Many deem Wilde/Gentle/Eager et al hardly worthy of the term, but they conjure that innocent, pre-Beatles black-and-white era as neatly as milk bars, ton-up boys and neverhad-it-so-good. They lived on £20 a week and felt lucky to be driving their Minxes or Heralds, whereas Cochran had a Cadillac back home and sang wistfully of '59 Fords... ironic that he met his end in the slightly crap British version.

That April night he was on his way from a week-long gig at the Bristol Hippodrome back to Heathrow to get away from our cold climate and bad food with his songwriting girlfriend Sharon Sheeley. With them was leather-clad Gene Vincent, the artist Eddie was supposedly supporting but rapidly usurping in popularity.

Tantrum-prone Vincent (who would never truly recover from the injuries he sustained) had refused to take the train and Johnny Gentle's Sunbeam Rapier was already full. So a taxi it had to be, with tour manager Pat Tompkins up front, the three Americans in the rear. RBO 859 was cream and had just been used for a wedding, with remnants of confetti inside to prove it.

It was a fine, dry night, but from the beginning Cochran was telling the driver (named George Martin, the first of many coincidences) to slow down as he urged the Ford along, often at speeds not far short of its 79mph maximum. Having lost the signs for the A4, and perhaps somewhat overwhelmed by the fame of his passengers, the 19-year-old cabbie felt the need to put his foot down even harder after finding himself going in the wrong direction, back towards Bath.

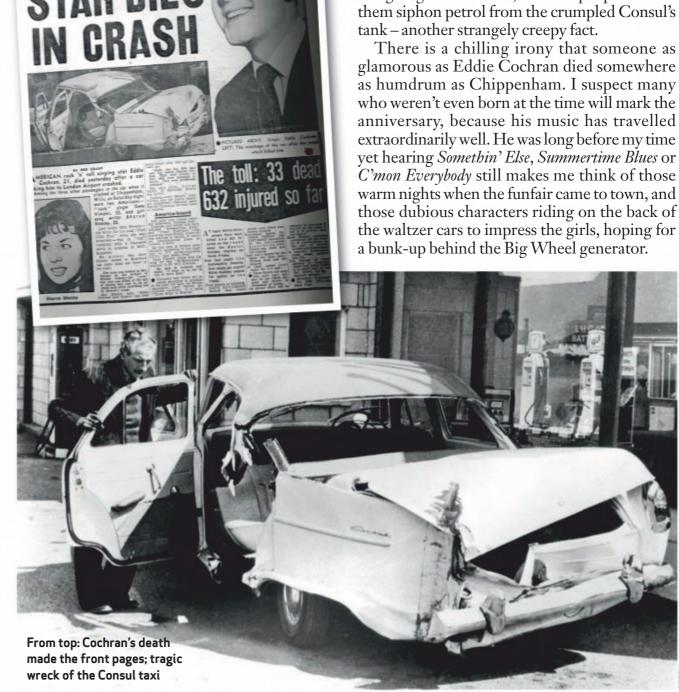
Some accounts say a tyre blew, others that he locked the brakes when he realised he was going the wrong way. Passing under a bridge he got the heavily laden, crossply-shod Consul into

'Cochran had a Cadillac at home and sang wistfully of '59 Fords... ironic that he met his end in a slightly crap British version'

a tank-slapper, hit the kerb and then the concrete post. The time was almost exactly midnight. Bereft of seatbelts, the Ford was bent like

Bereft of seatbelts, the Ford was bent like a banana, welds splitting along the sills and rear pillar. Martin and Tompkins walked away but the rear occupants were splayed on the grass verge. Vincent and Sheeley were conscious but in obvious pain; Cochran was ominously silent.

One of the first of the local constabulary upon this grim scene was a young cadet called Dave Harmer, later to find fame in Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich. The wreck was initially taken to Pugh's Garage, where Gentle and his friends encountered it *en route* to London in the early hours of Sunday morning, unaware of the recent tragic events. They were short of fuel and the garage was closed, but the proprietor let them siphon petrol from the crumpled Consul's tank—another strangely creepy fact.





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Letter of the month

Why supplying movie freebies wasn't a no-brainer for BMC

Enough! For the umpteenth time, in the December issue of C&SC we read about how dissatisfied the people behind The Italian Job were with the response from BMC's PR department on the supply of Minis. Sadly, all of the people involved are now dead, so they cannot defend themselves, but I did work with some of them in the 1970s, and would like to explain why it wasn't quite such a 'no-brainer'.

Firstly, it may have escaped the notice of our auteurs that BMC went through the appallingly misguided, politically sponsored takeover by Leyland during this period. At the time that merger talks began, BMC technical director Sir Alec Issigonis was pushing hard for his even more radical '9X' design to replace the Mini, which he then regarded as old hat. So, even before Donald Stokes took control, we had the first rumblings of the 'classic' Mini's imminent demise (it was to continue for a record 33 years after 1967!).

Investment funds were limited, as always, so work went on with Roy Haynes' very Ford-flavoured ADO20 facelift, the Clubman, as a stopgap.

Following the May 1968 merger, the ADO20 was confirmed for launch in 1969, and Donald Stokes specifically decreed that Mini Coopers should be phased out, against all common sense. Further, it was clear that the publicity focus in 1969 would have to be on the Clubman/1275GT models, so how many brownie points was a PR department going to win if it threw thousands of pounds' worth of obsolescent cars at a film?

That wasn't the only factor. There were others, such as the inevitable internal politics affecting the PR dept before, during and after the merger. A desperate George Harriman had brought in Raymond Baxter as BMC's head of motoring publicity without squaring things with incumbents such as PR director Brian Turner, which didn't exactly expedite major project decisions – and both men were ousted as soon as Leyland came in. Pity the 'poor bloody infantry' who had to carry on through all this. At least one of the BMC PRs of the time, well-experienced in film work, was mustard-keen to get involved, but he had no authority to do so.

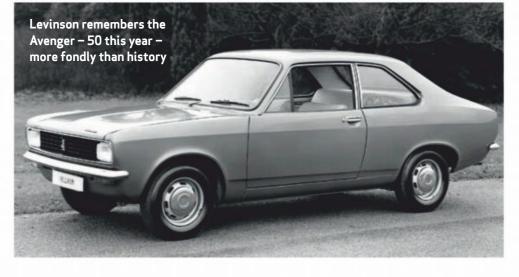
From my own, later experience, there are general caveats when getting involved in film/TV projects. Yes, The Italian Job was superb, and it did promote the Mini generally, even if Cooper production had stopped (apart from a trickle of Mk3 'S' cars) by the time it arrived in cinemas. But that is pure hindsight, and no one can

guarantee beforehand that even the best script won't be interfered with and beget a turkey, or portray the product negatively. There is always a queue of people wanting free cars, and you could give away your entire production if you were so minded!

Ian Elliott

Earlswood, Warwickshire





Hillman's heyday

February 2020 marks 50 years since the launch of the Hillman Avenger. At that time, I was a salesman with the Chrysler main agent in South Harrow, Middlesex (Normand Garages, part of the I Lyons Group).

It was a spectacular launch, and on the first Saturday the showroom was seven deep. Chrysler spent vast sums of money promoting the car and Vivas, Escorts and Cortina Mk2s came flooding in on partexchange. It really was a wonderful period to be involved.

The cars themselves were good, reliable and sold very well, and by November I was invoicing cars with chassis numbers into the 60,000s. Sadly, all good things come to an end, and that showroom is now an Asda!

Peter Levinson

Via email

Phaeton's a steal

Martin Buckley's Backfire column in the December issue stirred fond reminiscences of the wonderful 'giant Passat'. My first Phaeton was stolen when it was only weeks old, and I was certain that Volkswagen had arranged the theft in order to enhance the car's cachet. When I put this theory to the then newly appointed VW CEO, a replacement appeared within days.

The theft was never denied!

Mark Wood Via email



VW Phaeton was underrated, reckons Wood

Council confusion

As the leader of Conran's design team for the Land Rover Project Jay/Discovery interior (C & SC, December), I vividly remember a Range Rover shell being craned into our workshop off Tottenham Court Road early one Sunday for us to build interior mock-ups within.

In those pre-airbag days, I also recall generating design ideas such as a sunglasses case built into the central boss of the wheel. It was a uniquely fun project, because LR lent us several Range Rovers, Land Cruisers and Shoguns to thrash around the countryside over a number of weekends.

However, although Paul Weller's Style Council was the epitome of contemporary cool, I don't recall them running an awards scheme – I suspect Jack Phillips meant the Design Council, which did indeed recognise the car with a gong!

Graeme Bell

Via email

Pedant of the month

Pedant of the month wins a C&SC baseball cap. Send your observations to alastair. clements@haymarket.com



In your Gilbern Cars review (Books, December), you perpetuate the misconception that Gilbern was Wales' only car maker. This overlooks Davrian (above), which built cars in Tregaron and then Lampeter from 1976 to 1983. These cars are still active, particularly in rallying, achieving their best results on Tarmac events.

With the production of the Aston Martin DBX also being in Wales, and maybe the new TVR Griffith, hopefully this error will finally be put to bed.

David Lea

Comments & clarifications

The Holden sedan listed in the October article on Monterey Car Week as a 28-215 FX is in fact a 48-215. The 48 denotes the year of the introduction, and the X refers to the X-shaped front-end reinforcement needed to handle our Australian 'roads'.

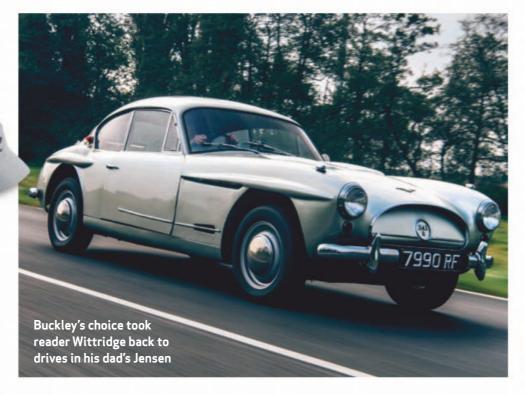
David Goodsir

In 'The Lane Changers' (November), an otherwise excellent piece was marred by reference to the Jaguar Mk2's 'quarter-elliptic' rear springs. Whereas my Healey Sprite does have them, my (and every other) Mk2 features semielliptics, albeit cantilevered. Perhaps the author should be 'suspended' for this...

Jonathan Colley

I'm not sure what happened in the rebuild of the Studebaker Hawk in the December issue (Your classics): it seems to have been transformed into a right-hand-drive car when Guy Allen produced his cartoon!

Chris Dowlen



Bromwich bomber

I felt moved to write in to say how delighted I was at Martin Buckley's championing of the Jensen 541R in your January issue. My father ran two of these in quick succession in the 1960s and '70s as his daily drivers – as an ex-RAF Spitfire pilot, the big engine and the aerodynamics appealed to him! – and I have great memories of them.

We'd often drive from home in Solihull to visit my grandmother in Teddington, the M1 section from near Rugby to the North Circular being covered in around an hour. On one of these trips we were overtaken by a moustachioed gent in a Gullwing Mercedes, but I don't recall anything else passing us. The Jensens were equally memorable in London traffic, cocooned in rich red leather with the *Light Programme* playing.

Sadly, the first met its end in a head-on crash on the Fosse Way. My father sustained a smashed kneecap, although he never wore a seatbelt. The second 541R passed on to Mum when Dad chose to commute in his M45 Lagonda. She replaced it with an SE6 Scimitar – the less said of that the better.

(Mostly) great memories! Don Wittridge

Via email

Made for the M1

Your November article about the M1 brought to mind an incident in 1963. We had been campaigning the Rigg Jaguar D-type in the Six Hours club event at Silverstone in the wet the previous day, and were exhausted at the end of the event so, when we turned in back in Lydiate Ash, Bromsgrove, we decided to scrub Snetterton the following day.

But it dawned sunny and very driveable. We were too late to get there with our transporter, the ex-Mike Hawthorn Green Line bus, so decided to load up the Austin Westminster and drive it to Snetterton in convoy with the D.

Because the Westminster was slower, Mark (Rigg) followed it in the Jaguar down the M1, where I settled at an indicated 100mph. Near Newport Pagnell I heard a bang and the car swung violently to the left. As I corrected, the big Austin veered across the right lane and at one point I really thought she might roll. However, as I got it more or less pointing the right way,



Virr (yellow sweater) with XKSS at Impney

we came to a halt with one of the left tyres in shreds. The D stopped behind me and we changed the wheel with Mark chuckling about the bizarre course I had taken.

By now very late, we headed on in the D at high speed, hitting about 150mph at one point, and arrived just before scrutineering finished. The only other thing I can remember is having to bleed the D's brakes after practice. That was a pig because you had to do it with the engine running, a gear engaged and a rear wheel off the ground so the gearbox-driven Plessey pump would pressurise the system.

The Westy wasn't as staid as it was sometimes painted, and made a good tow car for a single-seater. I attach a picture of Mark's XKSS at Chateau Impney in '63. Fun stuff.

Mike Virr

Via email

Therapy on track

I couldn't agree more with Ray Ganderton's non-medical approach to cancer treatment (Letters, January), because I am also on the wretched chemo – urrgh!

But I get extreme pleasure – and a serious cheer-up kick - out of racing a 1967 BMW 1600Ti with the Classic Sports Car Club's Swinging Sixties series. What a blast, with lots of great people.

David Cornwallis

Leominster



Cornwallis races the Radio Caroline BMW

White van rage

Following December's Our classics, I shared Martin Buckley's irritation when being harassed in my Bentley S3, a very similar car to Martin's Cloud 2 and powered by the same 6.2-litre V8 with 200bhp-plus.

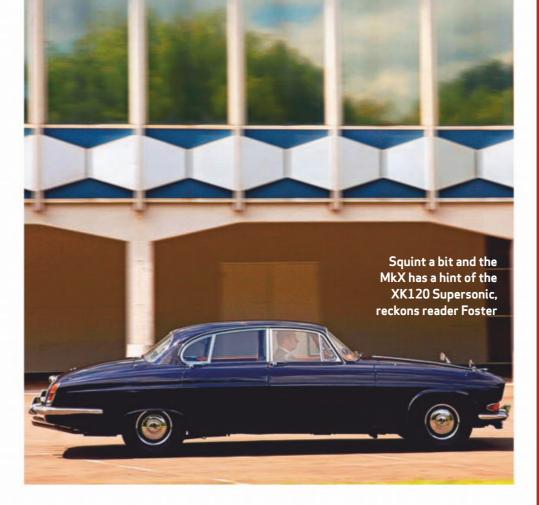
I had called in on my old friend John Nunn at Surrey Trimmers to see what magic he could perform on the car's leather. On leaving Chertsey, I was about to head over the M3 on the A320 when a most impatient Transit Connect van sat on my bumper at every junction until we left the town. As the road became a dual carriageway, and the 40 limit ended, I moved over but had already engaged third on the auto 'box, which has huge scope.

As he screamed alongside, the torque of the V8 matched his acceleration. We were level pegging to 70mph when I engaged top, felt enough was done and backed off. Furthermore, I had the task of bringing two tonnes of Crewe's finest to a slow, given that I could see a blind left-hander ahead.

My adversary had the satisfaction of having 'beaten' the old girl as he somehow clung on and disappeared without so much as a dab of his brakes. But shock mixed with delight on seeing a mobile speed camera set up immediately inside the 30 zone as I rounded the bend: there was no chance the van could have got down to the limit on time.

The simple message here? Don't mess with '60s classics!

Paul Jolly Totnes, Devon



Sonic bloom

I greatly enjoyed Mick Walsh's article on the Jaguar XK120 Supersonic by Ghia (January).

The final paragraph posed the question of what Sir William Lyons would have made of the styling and to my eyes the Jaguar MkX, which appeared some seven years after the XK120 Supersonic, bears more than a passing resemblance to Ghia's work - albeit on a considerably larger scale.

So maybe it did influence some of the thinking at Browns Lane?

Toby Foster

Via email

Chelsea tunes

I loved the Mini in London article (December). My late father had a grey Mini of similar vintage, string interior doorhandles and all.

It was his first new car, when such things weren't easy to come by in New Zealand, and five of us used to go on holidays in it with suitcases on our knees (early airbags?!).

The Chelsea Drugstore song references, though, are missing an important one: 'I went down to the Chelsea Drugstore, to get your

prescription filled' (You Can't Always Get What You Want, The Rolling Stones). I do miss the '60s! Mark Holman

..........

Wellington, New Zealand

Birthday specials

It was nice to see in the January issue a story on the use of glassfibre (GRP) by low-volume builders and, in particular, the inclusion of two 'specials' from the late 1950s.

The importance of GRP in the development of the specialist and kit-car industries in the UK can't be underestimated, and neither can the special-building boom that resulted in companies such as Ginetta, Marcos et al. Thankfully, the specials of that period are no longer seen as 'plastic horrors', but worthy of preservation in their own right. They are perhaps even more appreciated in Europe.

The Fairthorpe Sports Car Club has long championed these cars, and 2020 is the 60th anniversary of the club's formation, so hopefully there will be a large turnout at the annual Specials Day at Burford, Oxfordshire, in August.

Peter Jones

Llanybydder, Carmarthenshire





IN THE APRIL ISSUE*

Giugiaro's masterpiece

Dream mountain drive in Bertone's 'Sharknose' Ferrari 250GT SWB



PLUS One man's mission to find, revive and enjoy his father's Simca racer

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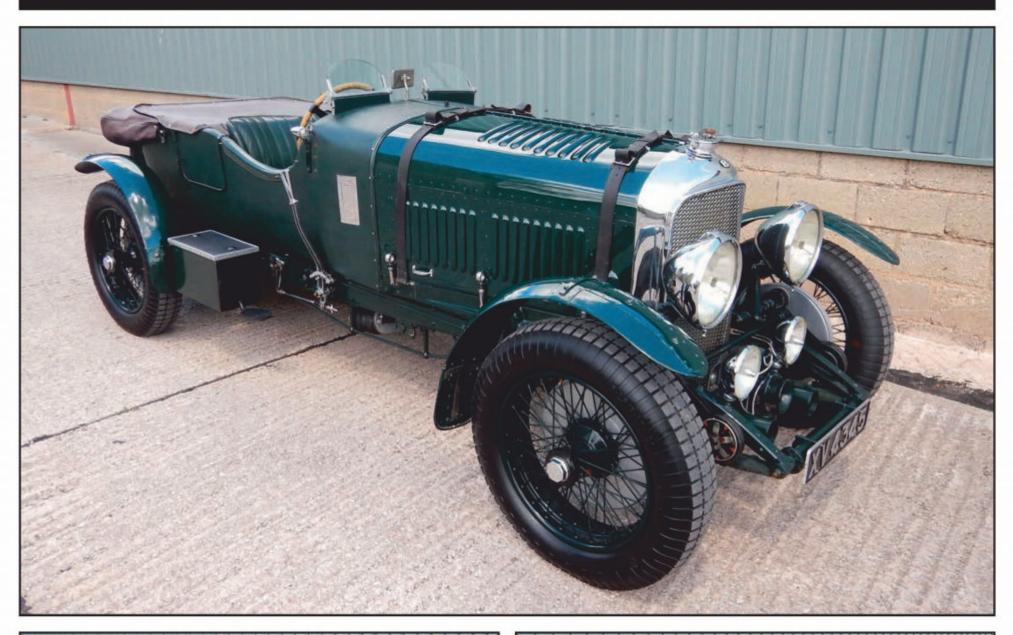


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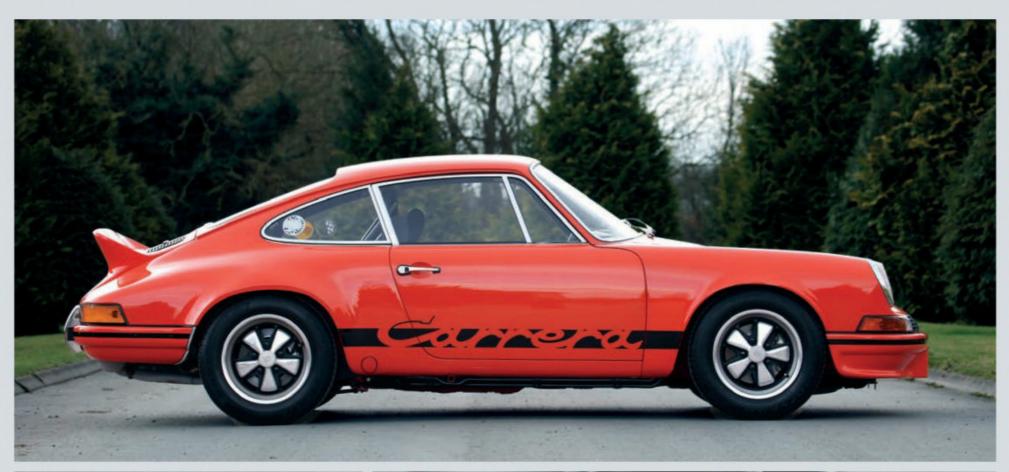
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P3/4 David Piper Tribute Car



- 5 Litre, 500 H.P. Ferrari engine was built by the renowned engine builder, Ted Wenz.
- Drive line includes a Hewland transaxle.
- Body includes an aluminum nose and tail.
- Signed plaque by David Piper affixed to car.







Car of The Month 1958 Aston Martin DB MKIII LHD

We are delighted to offer for sale this stunning Aston Martin DB MKIII which is ONE of just 83 factory LHD MKIII's. Having recently undergone a bare metal respray by Aston Workshop in 2015, this MKIII is finished in Pewter Grey

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Finished in Royal Claret with Magnolia interior, we're delighted to offer this beautiful 1960 DB4 for sale.

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Morning Frost White with Red Hide. Only 24,370 miles with full Aston Martin service history.

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Aston Martin V8 Vantage in Grigio Titanio Ferarri Silver and Caspian Blue Leather

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With over 260 years of collective knowledge in the business we are an internationally prominent independent Aston Martin specialist with many unique products for the enthusiast marketplace. These include right and left hand drive conversions, European and tropical air conditioning systems, 6 speed automatic gearbox conversions and a comprehensive suite of warranty backed engine upgrades, re-engineered parts and enhancements - all developed in house over decades. A vast number of our products are only available from Aston Workshop. This combined with our depth of expertise in bodywork, paint, trim and chassis work ensures we occupy a most highly regarded position in the world of independent Aston Martin specialists. No task on your Aston is too big or too small, and with so many years of experience at your fingertips, using Aston Workshop makes a smart choice. Our North East base also makes us ideally placed to offer competitive prices.

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If you are thinking about selling your Aston Martin we are keen to speak with you. Even if your car needs restoration, mechanical attention or has been unused in its recent history we would welcome a no obligation conversation. We offer professional nationwide collection using our in house covered transport service. We are happy to work around your personal requirements and can offer a variety of solutions for customers within the UK and worldwide for both right and left hand drive examples. We have a large database of customers actively looking for all models of Aston Martin to purchase across all eras of production. From concours winning cars to unfinished restorations and barn finds, we are interested in your vehicle.

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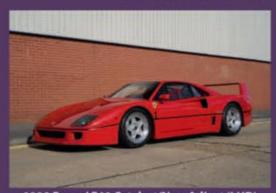




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Alfa Romeo Giulia GTC 1966 - RHD 1 of 99 examples produced







Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GTA Stradale 1966 - RHD - 1 of 50 examples produced



Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint Veloce Alleggerita 1957 - Facetti prepared



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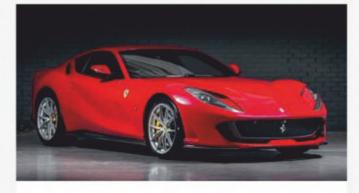
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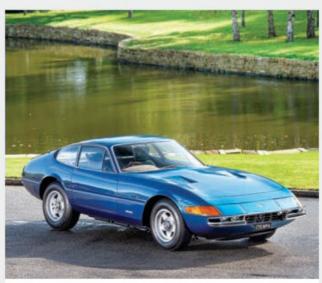
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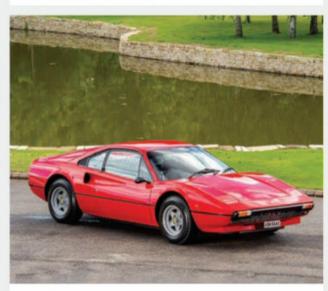
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Ferrari 330 GT America 1964 blu scuro/blu scuro

Ferrari 275 GTB/2 Shortnose 1965 nero/pelle orange

Ferrari 275 GTB/2 Longnose

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Ferrari 275 GTB/4 1967 grigio argento/nero

Ferrari 330 GTC 1967 azzurro/nero

Ferrari 330 GTC 1967 azzurro/beige

Ferrari 246 GT Dino 1970 azzurro/nero

Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Plexi 1970 giallo/nero

Ferrari 246 GT Dino 1971 rosso/nero Ferrari 365 GTS/4 Daytona Spider

1971 rosso/beige

Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona 1972 celeste/nero

Ferrari 365 GTC/4
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Ferrari 430 GT3 2007 rosso/blu

Ferrari LaFerrari 2016 bianco italia/mandarina

Lamborghini Miura P 400 1968 blu met./beige

Lamborghini 400 GT 2+2 1966 argento/nero

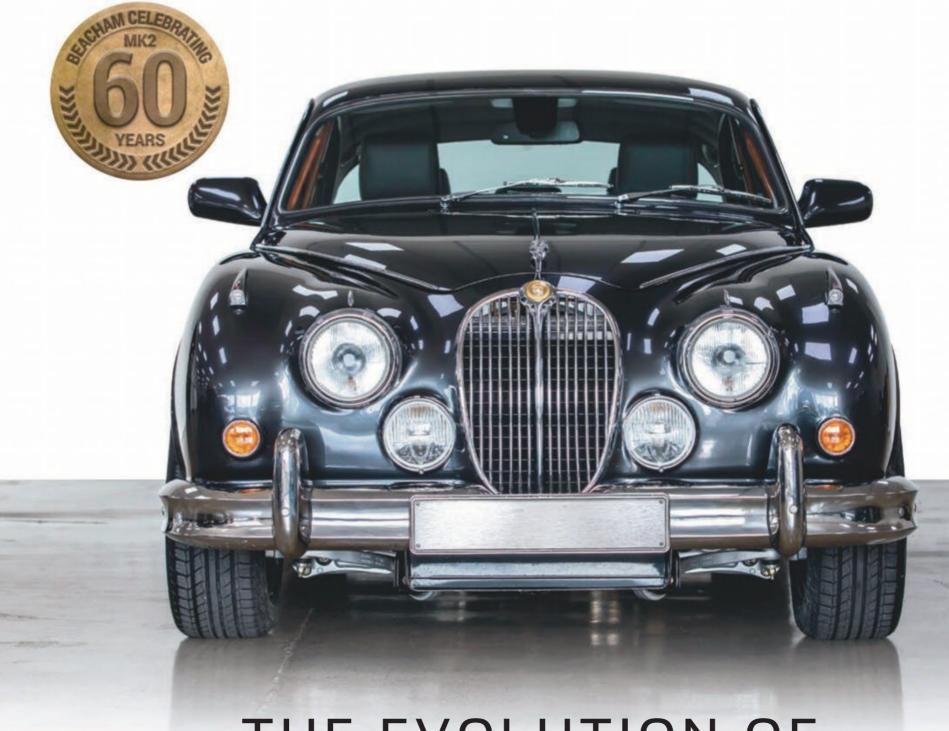






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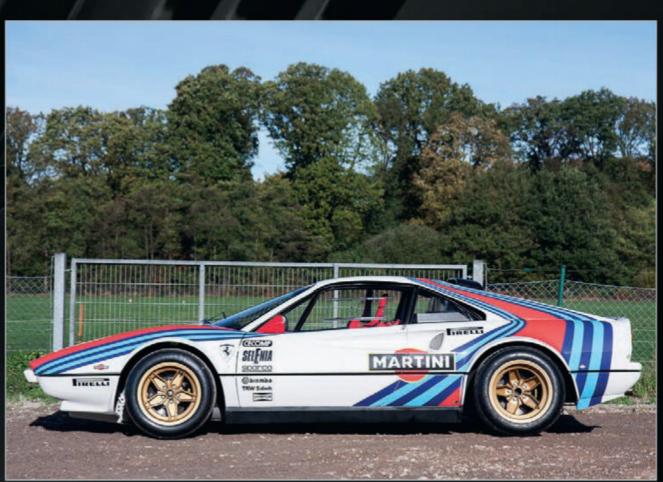


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1989 Bentley Corniche Convertible. Finished in Spruce Green with Parchment Leather Piped Green interior & green mohair hood. Well maintained example having just completed a major European tour. Exceptional in every way & ready for a smile a mile fun motoring. Please call or email for further details.



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Jaguar E-type S1 3.8 Cabriolet 1964. Matching numbers.



Durant Motors Inc. Rugby 1929. Racer.



Triumph GT6 MKII Overdrive 1971.
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Ford F100 Custom Cab Pickup 1966. 5.7L V8.



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FERRARI 308 GTB QV, 1983, silver / black, EU-Version



FERRARI 308 GTS, 1984, black / black, EU-Version



FERRARI 308 GTS QV, 1984, black / tabacco, EU-Version



FERRARI 365 GT 2+2, 1969, blue / black



FERRARI 365 GT 2+2, 1969, blue / tabacco



FERRARI 365 GT 2+2, 1969, silver / black



FERRARI TESTAROSSA 512 TR, 1991, red / black



FERRARI DINO 308 GT4, 1980, grey / red



DINO 246 GT, 1972, silver / black



PORSCHE 964 TARGA, 1990, blue / tabacco



PORSCHE 996 TURBO, 2001, sealgrey metallic / grey



ALPINA B12 5,0 COUPÉ, 1992, dark green metallic / brown



FERRARI 365 GT/4 BB, 1974, silver / black

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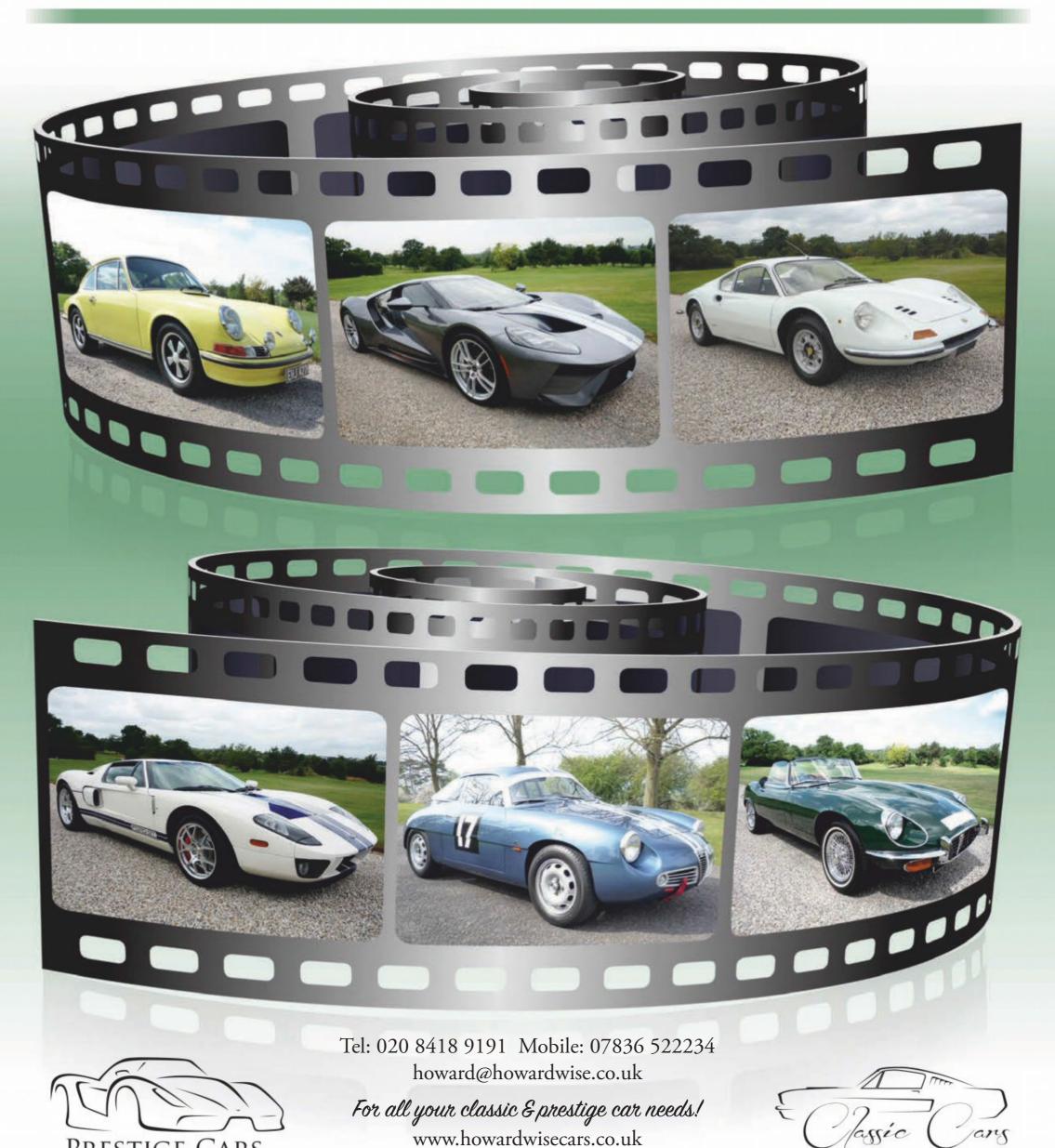


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1994 BMW 325i Convertible Auto......£8,990

This rare and desirable example is finished in Sienna Red Metallic with Black Leather Interior and has covered 76,066 Miles. Specification includes heated mirrors, graduated tinted glass, electric hood operation & sports alloys. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



2000 Jaguar XKR Coupé 4.2 Supercharged .. £17,000

Finished in Anthracite Metallic with Oatmeal leather upholstery, a Burr Walnut wood dashboard & a mileage of 66,554. This vehicle was originally launched at the Geneva Motor Show in 1996. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



2005 Maserati 4200 Coupé Cambiocorsa..... £17,990

The Maserati Coupé is a true four-seater capable of comfortably seating two adults in the rear seats. This 4200 Coupé Cambiocorsa has only covered 38,887 miles and includes unmarked Beige Leather. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



1992 Range Rover Vogue 4.0 SE V8.....£24,990

Combining majestic good looks, luxury levels of refinement and comfort. This outstanding example has a mileage of 61,923 and is presented in Aspen Silver Metallic with Dark Brown leather upholstery and Walnut inlays. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



1985 Porsche 944 Coupé.....

This magnificent vehicle is finished in Crystal Green Metallic with full leather sports seats. Registered and supplied on 1st August 1985 the vehicle has covered a mere 25,442 miles and benefits from a 12 stamp Porsche Service History. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



1991 Jaguar XJS V12.....£28,990

To commemorate Jaguars success at the '24 Heures du Mans' a limited edition 'Le Mans' model was introduced. This car is number 266 of 280 and is finished in Signal Red with Magnolia interior and contrasting seat piping with a mileage of 47,000. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



1990 Mercedes-Benz 420 V8.....

From just 3,680 units manufactured world-wide, this is believed to be one of only 98 left in the UK. Covering 63,924 miles, this vehicle has the best colour combination of Blue Black Metallic with contrasting full Grey leather upholstery. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



1982 Mercedes-Benz 280 SL Auto......£37,990

We are delighted to offer this vehicle with exceptionally low mileage of 37,966. This is a truly fantastic example presented in an original period colour finished in Thistle Green Metallic, with Sports Check interior. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



2012 BMW 1M Coupé......£46,990

We offer this outstanding BMW 1M, 1 of only 450 cars made for the UK market. Finished in Alpine White with Black Boston leather upholstery, this example has covered a mere 35,167 miles and comes with a full BMW Service History and more. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



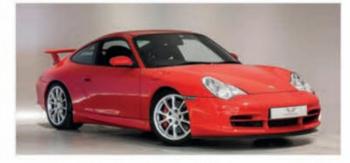
1978 Daimler Sovereign LWB Auto £47,990

Manufactured in 1978, the first part of its life was spent in a museum and the second part in a private collection. Finished in Squadron Blue with a complementing Blue leather interior, this vehicle has only covered 400 miles. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.



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2004 Porsche 911 [996] Carrera GT3......£69,990

This particular GT3 is in great condition both mechanically and cosmetically. This sensational car comes with a great specification including bucket seats, unmarked 18" GT3 alloys & on-board computer with a range of useful options. For full specification and history visit petervardy.com/heritage.

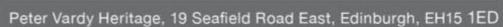


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Fiat 508C Barchetta ex-MM – 1937Authentic four time Mille Miglia participant with fully documented history. Price: 575.000 Euro



Aston Martin V8 Volante LHD – 1982Rare (216 ex.) LHD & carburettor version. Low-mileage car restored in Switzerland. Price: 222.000 Euro



AREYT CLASSICS

Fiat 508C Barchetta by Bidée – 1938One-off by Brussels coachbuilder Bidée, perfect Mille Miglia entrant. Price: 255.000 Euro



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very now and then, a car comes along that turns the automotive world on its head. A model that not only tops its class, but widens the gap to its competitors by such a degree that it completely redefines it. All things to all men, the solution to life's ills. Jaguar struck on the secret formula in 1961, creating in the E-type a car that was the perfect blend of stunning looks and groundbreaking performance. Ford managed the same trick with the Mustang three years later, bringing high performance and sleek GT looks to the blue-collar enthusiasts who had hitherto been priced out of buying a car for the sheer enjoyment of it.

But while those companies built on a sales legacy stretching back generations, Nissan's achievement was all the more remarkable for having come from comparatively nowhere. The Japanese firm's home-run came in 1969 with the Fairlady Z, sold as the Datsun 240Z outside its home market, which stole a march on its rivals by combining electrifying pace and fresh looks with a level of fit and finish that overnight made its contemporaries look like donkey-carts. In the crucial US market, the Datsun was so keenly priced that to opt for an alternative from the chasing peloton became almost unthinkable.

Few could have predicted the next big thing to come from the Land of the Rising Sun. Until the Z, the most successful Japanese exports had leaned heavily on Britain's motoring legacy for their inspiration. The cars that resonated most, particularly in America, were the 1600 and 2000 Roadsters, utilitarian machines in the mould of the Sprite and Midget – a pared-back hangover from the sidescreened sports cars of the 1950s. Nissan's beachhead in the UK, meanwhile, was only established in 1968, and its first few years were hampered by crippling import duties and an arrangement to share dealerships with NSU, which was itself almost immediately subsumed by Audi. By the end of the decade, compatriot Daihatsu had only managed to sell eight cars to British buyers – it would take something very special to make a more serious impression.

'An attractive classic coupé, its clean, modern lines spoke more to the 1970s than the decade in which it was born'

Japanese manufacturers have since become the masters at analysing and evaluating the competition to inform their designs – you need look no further than the Mazda MX-5 or Honda NSX for proof of that. But it was the 240Z that blazed the trail, looking to improve upon - rather than emulate - the most successful cars from overseas. Nowhere was this more important than visual styling, which led Fumio Yoshida and Kumeo Tamura to pore over the headline coupés of the day – notably Toyota's 2000GT, Jaguar's E-type and even the Ferrari 275GTB, whose proportions informed the Japanese design from the earliest days of its development. What began as the Albrecht von Goertz-inspired A550X prototype quickly transformed into something very different: an attractive classic coupé with practical dimensions and clean, modern lines that spoke more to the 1970s than the decade in which it was born. Testament to the team's talent that work had only begun in November 1965.

So important was the styling to the project that the clay model was agreed upon before Hitoshi Uemura, Tsuneo Benitani and Hidemi Kamahara had the chance to get their teeth into the mechanical elements, with the team subsequently facing myriad obstacles to make everything fit. Some parts were taken straight off the shelf, with the front suspension – a lateral



Datsun & Nissan Z-cars A SPOTTER'S GUIDE

The 240Z is most familiar to British buyers, but there was a raft of Z variations, quite apart from tuner specials such as the Super Samuri. Here's our pick of the factory-sanctioned road cars



FAIRLADY Z 1969-'78 Japanese Domestic Market Z has a 2-litre 'six' and funky mirrors



Z432 1970-'73 Skyline power means four valves per cylinder, three Webers, two cams





ZG 1971-'72 Group 4 homologation special with streamlined nose, fat arches and LSD



260Z 1973-'78 Bigger 2565cc straight-six, but visually very close to its 240 forebear



260Z 2+2 1973-'78 **12**in wheelbase stretch and raised roof mean space for rear seats



280Z 1975-'78 Fuel-injected **275**4cc 'six' in the original body, for the US market only



















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subframe, suspension arm and MacPherson strut arrangement – being borrowed from the existing 1800 Laurel saloon. Other components, including the rear end, required more thought. In the end, the team opted for a Lotus-style set-up of lower A-arms and vertical struts located in the luggage area, which offered superb roadholding but exposed a lack of torsional rigidity. Because the brief called for two full-sized suitcases to fit in the boot, linking the struts wasn't an option, so the designers went to great lengths to beef up the sills and apply reinforcing plates. Practicality was retained, though a strutbrace was offered as an aftermarket extra.

Aware that the target market was North America, half an eye was also kept on Federal regulations, both in terms of crash resilience and meeting weight restrictions for emissions testing. Late changes included swapping out the 70-litre petrol tank for a 60-litre item, which not only helped achieve the target weight of 2300lb, but was also better suited to withstanding more stringent collision tests that were on the horizon. Previously, only frontal impacts were assessed, but new rules would mean rear safety would also be considered – any petrol leaking from the tank in the event of a crash would spell disaster. The differential was moved forward, further from the tank, resulting in the driveshafts

DATSUN 240Z

Sold/number built 1969-'73/156,078 **Construction** steel monocoque Engine iron-block, alloy-head, singleoverhead-cam 2393cc straight-six, twin Hitachi SU-type carburettors **Max power** 151bhp @ 5600rpm Max torque 146lb ft @ 4400rpm **Transmission** five-speed manual, RWD Suspension independent, at front by MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar rear MacPherson struts **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** discs front, drums rear, with servo **Length** 13ft 7in (4140mm) **Width** 5ft 4in (1625mm) **Height** 4ft 2½in (1283mm) Wheelbase 7ft 6in (2299mm) Weight 2284lb (1038kg) **0-60mph** 8 secs Top speed 125mph Mpg 24

Price new £2288 (1971)

Price now £20-50,000

being swept back slightly. Engineers saved valuable grams by reducing the glass thickness from 5mm to 4mm, and ditching heavy safety bumpers in favour of pressed steel. Weight was so crucial that the addition of underseal would have tipped it over the edge – as a result, it was applied by dealers rather than at the factory.

That the 240Z had North America firmly in its sights almost from the point of inception was due in no small part to impassioned lobbying of Nissan's forward-thinking US chief, Yutaka Katayama. Having spent time in the country, 'Mr K' was remarkably in tune with the American market and served as a bridge between Tokyo and the States, helping to steer development in a direction that prepared the car for success abroad. Sadly, this included sidestepping the sublime Prince-developed four-valve, triple-carb, twin-cam 2-litre S20 engine in favour of something more palatable in the land of the Big Mac and aerosol cheese. The twin-cam screamer did find a home in the Skyline GT-R and the Japan-only quasi-racer Z432, but the mass-market Z instead received the 2.4-litre L24, a muscular straight-six with a cubic capacity that wouldn't spook American buyers more accustomed to big V8s.

Few interiors capture the essence of the 1970s grand tourer in quite the same way as the 240Z,



280ZX 1978-'83 Softer GT, with optional T-bar roof and turbo (also 200ZX in Japan)



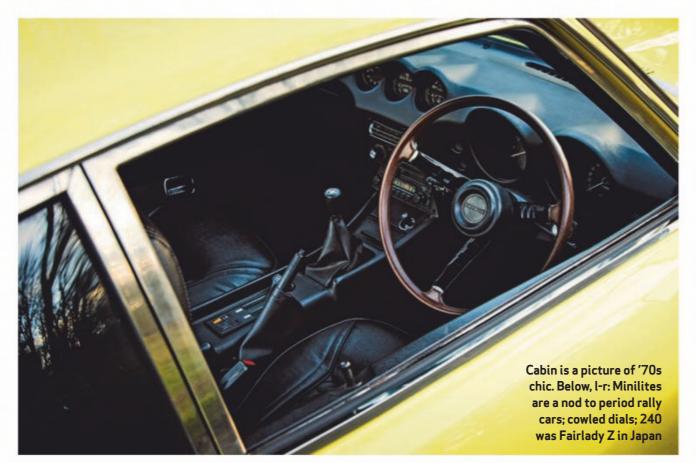
300ZX (Z31) 1983-'89 All-new V6 motor (with turbo option) and sharp wedge profile



300ZX (Z32) 1989-2000 All-new junior supercar with 300bhp in twin-turbo form



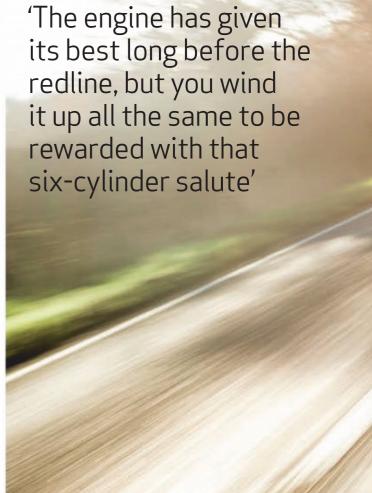
 ${\bf 300ZX\ CONVERTIBLE}\ 1992\text{-}2000\ {\bf First}$ factory-sanctioned chop by ASC in the US











the long doors giving access to two low-slung vinyl chairs in a cockpit that feels both familiar and comfortable. The tall, shapely seats are reminiscent of those in the Mazda MX-5, and are more accommodating than they look – *Road & Track*'s 6ft 2in road tester gave the coupé '10/10' for interior comfort in 1970 and it's hard to disagree. The driving position is perfect, giving a superb view of the deep-set instruments in the lavishly moulded dashboard and out over the rakishly dished, dark-stained wooden wheel to the long, sculpted bonnet beyond.

Values have risen dramatically in the past 10 years, pushing the 240Z from an affordable alternative to straight-six Brits such as the Triumph GT6 and MGC GT to a borderline exotic – so the chance to spend a full day with one of the best examples, straight from the heritage collection of its manufacturer, is a rare

treat. The Sunshine Yellow car owned by Nissan UK has undergone a full restoration in recent years to exacting standards, with a focus on originality. A few modifications have slipped through the net, however – including a racy set of Minilite wheels, all the rage as an aftermarket upgrade when the Datsun was new.

The second deviation from factory spec only becomes clear when you turn the key (after the obligatory few pumps of the accelerator to prime the carburettors). A purposeful bark and greedy induction noise announce the presence of triple 40DCOE Webers, which replace the original Hitachis, an SU derivative built under licence in Japan. The result is a typically lumpy idle from cold, and you have to tickle the throttle until the fluids warm through. As well as the intoxicating noise and underbonnet bling, the new carbs offer better fuelling and should improve on the

151bhp quoted by Datsun in period – itself enough to propel the coupé from rest to 60mph in 8 secs, and on to a top speed of 125mph.

It certainly feels quick enough on the road, with a sharp throttle response beautifully complementing the 2.4-litre big 'six'. There's torque in abundance; plant your right foot and it hauls like a freight train, a linear charge that continues to 5500rpm and beyond, where the triple Webers really begin to earn their keep. The engine has given its best long before the 7000rpm redline, but you'll wind it up all the same, if only to be rewarded with that glorious six-cylinder aural salute. The faster it spins, the angrier it seems to sound, transforming from slightly gruff and uninspiring to something truly spine-tingling. The Z's designers didn't think that 'ostentatious explosions' were suitable for their concept, so the exhaust noise is relatively



350Z 2002-'08 Clean-sheet design harks back to the original Z, with 3.5-litre V6



350Z ROADSTER 2003-'08 Factory full convertible, facelifted with coupé in 2006



370Z 2009-date **Shorter**, more aggressive looks with stiffer shell and 324bhp 3.7 V6



370Z ROADSTER 2009-date Prettier than the 350 drop-top, thanks to curvy hip line



muted, which serves only to shine a spotlight on the magical roar from under the bonnet.

Steering is something of an enigma in the Z. Original designs called for a caster angle of 6° to aid straight-line stability, but that resulted in nearly twice the steering effort required compared to the Porsche 911. The angle was halved for production, but the helm remains surprisingly weighty at low speeds, only easing up when you're really pressing on; it isn't long before your hands become sore from the effort of wrestling the wheel left and right. A slightly reluctant and rubbery gearchange contributes to the problem; you have to be assured and confident with each ratio, but it's sweet enough and doesn't mind being hurried.

These quirks are easy to forgive on the undulating back-roads of Oxfordshire, a winding network of S-bends, hills and hollows that becomes, for an afternoon at least, your private test track. Pick up the speed and there's a bias towards understeer, but turn in harder and the front end hooks up nicely, with surprisingly little body roll. The steering is a bit fluffy dead ahead, but like the gearbox it rewards a firmer hand, responding faithfully when the wheel loads up. Each change of direction is accompanied by a perfectly balanced shift of weight, like a boxer dancing on his toes. Over rougher surfaces and in tighter bends things become a bit more unsettled, with the scuttle shake you expect of any '60s sports car, but broadly the suspension does a decent job of keeping all four wheels on

the Tarmac. Most owners will have upgraded these components to tidy the handling and release the chassis' potential, but even in factory trim – insisted upon by the team at Nissan – the Z carries itself well, absorbing the worst of the bumps while remaining sharp enough for a grin to be planted permanently on your face.

If the 240Z has one flaw, it's price. Buying a nice one today will set you back the thick end of £30,000; even more if you want the very best. It's a problem that afflicted the car in period, too, at least in this country. To buy a Z in 1970 would cost nearly £2300, at a time when an MGB GT was less than £1500, and a Capri just £100 more than that. It's noteworthy that Datsun sold any at all, let alone the 1600 it actually shifted.

To properly measure the car's success you have to look at its target market: the United States. There, the Datsun represented staggering value, at almost half the cost of a Mercedes-Benz 280SL. If you wanted a home-grown Corvette, you'd have to increase your budget by 50% – even more still to get an E-type or 911T.

It takes an almost never-ending string of adjectives to sum up the success of the 240Z. Fast, agile, engaging, comfortable and beautiful make a fine start. But the final, and most important, is also the most surprising, and not one readily associated with such a superbly built and well-equipped sports car: cheap.

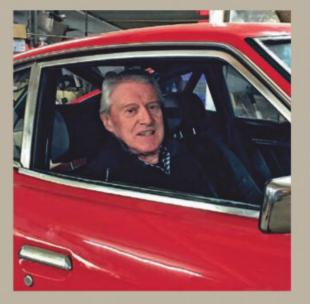
Thanks to Nissan UK (www.nissan.co.uk); The Z Farm (01845 595100; thezfarm.co.uk)

Specialist's view DUNCAN PEARCEY, THE Z FARM

Pearcey has been churning out top-quality Z restorations from his workshop in North Yorkshire for more than 20 years, and was responsible for supplying our test car to Nissan in 2003. "It was built in celebration of the forthcoming 350Z," he says. "We built the car to a very standard UK specification.

"Nowadays, there are very few genuinely restorable right-hand-drive examples, because 45 years of British winters have ravaged bodyshells to such an extent that most are beyond redemption. We tend to use them as donors, and bring in US cars from dry states such as California and Arizona."

"Mechanical components are well put together, cheap and plentiful," says Pearcey, "but shells are another story. I recommend looking in the engine bay at the inner wings, particularly where they meet the chassis rails; all classics have a defect where rust attacks first, and it's there on the 240Z. Look at the



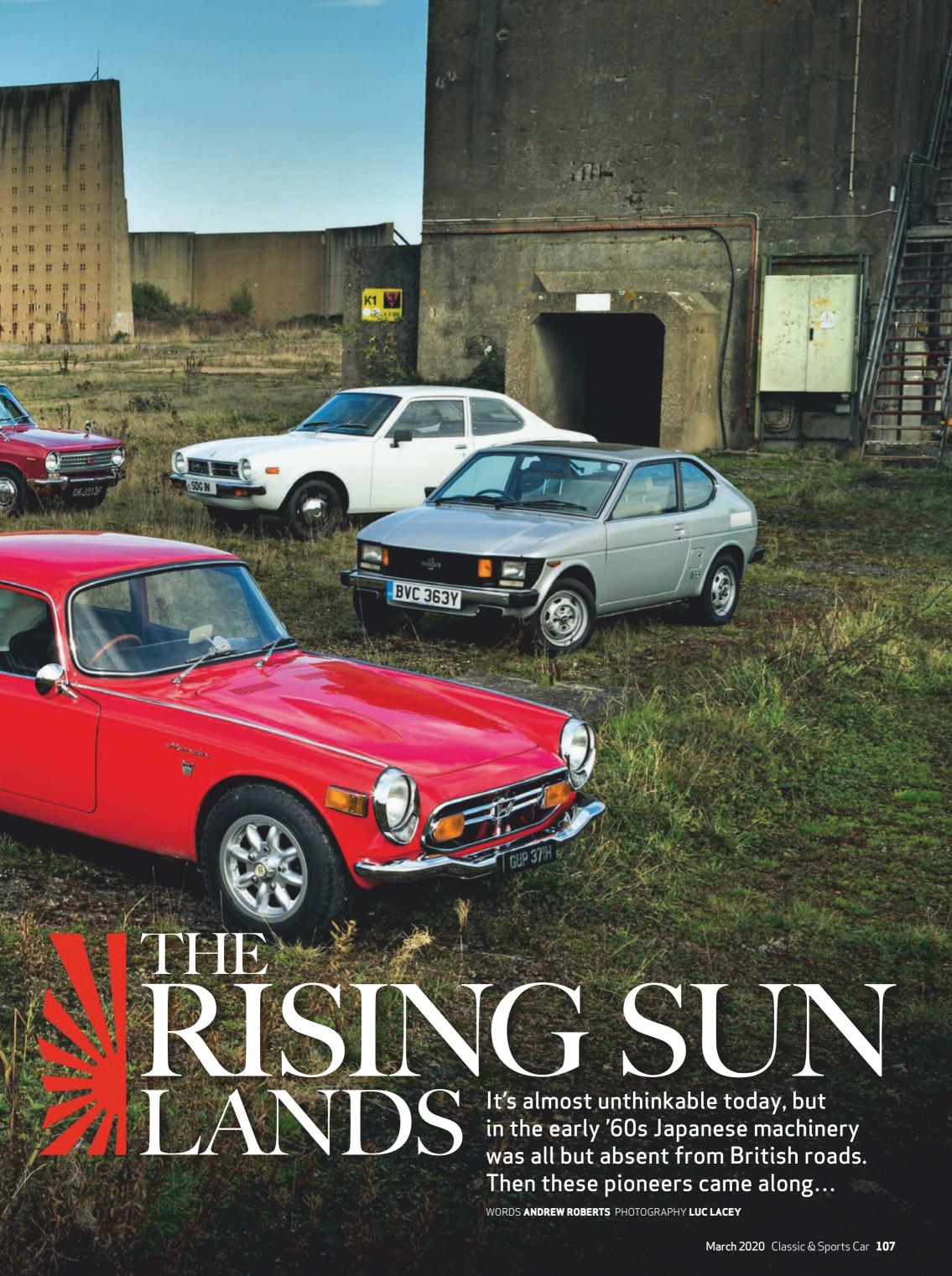
suspension turrets and around the front end where the bonnet hinges, then crawl beneath and have a good poke around. Rust can be cut out and repaired, but accident damage is more difficult. If you see creases, walk away."

The Z Farm produces repair panels for chassis rails, floorpans and sections of the front end, but some parts are unobtainable: "We can't get good external panels, such as wings, door and roof skins, tailgates and inner wings, which are especially complex."

Pearcey has noticed a steep rise in values: "10-12 years ago I was buying decent righthand-drive cars for £7-9000 and making a bit of profit. Now, those cars are three times that. You're talking high 20s for a tidy RHD 240Z today, maybe into the 30s; 260Zs are 10-15% less. Importing cars also has its risks. Every so often you find a gem, but by the time you've got it over here with shipping and duty any half-decent car is £15-20k."

A restored right-hooker from The Z Farm will set you back more than £50,000, but it's money well spent: "We put more than 1000 man-hours into each 240Z. Our aim is to produce as close to a new car as possible."









DAIHATSU COMPAGNO 800

Sold/no built 1965-'70/8 (UK sales only)
Engine 797cc ohv 'four', Solex carburettor;
40bhp @ 5000rpm; 47lb ft @ 3600rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones,
torsion bars rear live axle, semi-elliptic leaf
springs Steering recirculating ball
Brakes drums Weight 1631lb (740kg)
0-60mph 23.9 secs Top speed 68mph Mpg 65
Price new £799 17s 4d Price now from £8000

hen Dufay Motors announced in 1964 that it was to sell imported Daihatsus, it quietly heralded a British automotive revolution. At that time, the Japanese motor industry was producing 1,702,469 cars a year, but tweed-jacketed types regarded the Compagno as an interesting novelty. Eleven years later, however, such was the success of automobiles from the Land of the Rising Sun that the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders negotiated a 'voluntary restraint' of imports from Japan.

So where better to start sampling a group of pioneer British-market Japanese cars than CGH 8B, the first official import and the very Daihatsu that was reviewed by *Autocar* in 1965. The tester thought the Compagno 'well made but technically unadvanced' – although the likes of the Vauxhall Viva HA were not exactly cuttingedge. He also complained that it wouldn't reach 60mph on a one-mile straight against a strong headwind, but the Daihatsu's main appeal was as a chic town car rather than M1 transport.

The first-ever Japanese car in the UK now resides at the headquarters of official importer International Motors in Solihull. Its custodian, Steve Eardley, finds it very easy to drive and especially praises the four-speed column change: "It's very smooth, and will still put modern manual transmissions available here to shame!"

The Compagno took a bow in 1963, with the Fiat-like Vignale-styled body combined with a separate chassis. The 800 range was built until 1970, but the average British motorist is most likely to have encountered one being consumed by *Godzilla* at their local cinema. Aside from the challenges of selling a Japanese car 20 years after the end of WW2, a £799 price-tag meant the Daihatsu was considerably more expensive than a Ford Anglia 123E. However, any dealer would be able to highlight its good looks and standard equipment that included fog and reversing lamps, whitewall tyres and even a radio.

Eardley has no doubts that the Compagno could have been a success in the UK had it been properly marketed: "Dufay only had eight vehicles to begin with, and couldn't pay the manufacturer for them until they were sold. Daihatsu in Osaka thought its distributor would honour the debt, but having sold the cars Dufay went into liquidation without paying for them." Today, CGH 8B is simultaneously a reminder of a lost opportunity and a harbinger of the future.

The next Japanese manufacturer to tempt the British motorist was Toyota, with a four-car





Toyota's rather slabby sides end in a neat tail. Left: spacious interior for a family

line-up appearing at the 1965 London Motor Show, and the firm hoping that sales would reach 150-200 units per month by '66. Toyota unveiled the third-generation T40 Corona in 1964 and, while the outgoing T20 and T30 featured quasi-Detroit lines, the new model was styled by Pininfarina. From a modern perspective the Toyota appears ornate rather than fussy, although the official term was 'Arrow line'.

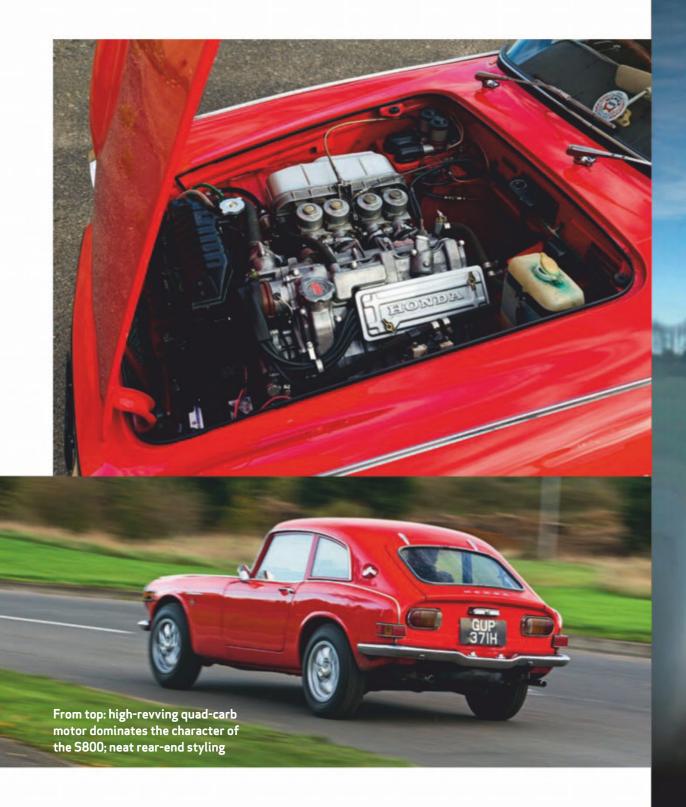
The entry-level model was tested by *Autocar* in 1966 and found to be 'a well-made family four-seater with lively performance'. The T40 was also built in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, much to the consternation of BMC's overseas sales division. 'Our' Corona is a De Luxe version, with an enticing specification including a clock, heated rear 'screen and a radio.

Such luxuries enticed curious motorists to call Motor Imports to arrange a test drive, although there would be social consequences of opting for a Corona over a Hillman Minx. The sight of a Toyota on the drive would prompt a formation bout of curtain-twitching and mutterings of "unpatriotic" from the neighbours. But by the time the T80 replaced the T40 in 1970, many Britons had already decided to 'buy foreign'.

XTB 341D joined the Toyota GB heritage fleet in 2006, and press officer Richard Seymour loves the fact the 1.5-litre saloon easily keeps up with modern traffic. The brakes present a minor challenge because, while they are strong enough, they are "rather on or off". That aside, however, this 54-year-old car remains a classic that could easily be used as a daily driver.

TOYOTA CORONA (T40)

Sold/no built 1965-'68/91 (UK sales only)
Engine 1490cc ohv 'four', Aisan carburettor;
74bhp @ 5000rpm; 85lb ft @ 2600rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by double wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar rear live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs
Steering worm and sector Brakes drums
Weight 2156lb (978kg) 0-60mph 17.2 secs
Top speed 87mph Mpg 26.8
Price new £777 6s 3d Price now from £6000



Around the same time that Toyotas were starting to appear in outer suburbia, Triumph, MG and Austin-Healey dealers were already becoming concerned about a Honda described by *Autocar* as 'a little projectile'. In the 1960s, more than a few 'bikers of the Gene Vincent School of Fashion would loudly opine to their fellow Ace Café *habitués* that Japanese motorcycles were sub-par (or words to that effect). But as early as 1962, sales figures of the newly formed Honda UK had reached five figures, and in the following year the company introduced the S500 sports car.

Soichiro Honda was determined to make the best cars in Japan: "To do that, I must make the best cars in the world." The S500 was progressively upgraded into the S600 in 1964,

HONDA S800

Sold/no built 1966-'70/11,536
Engine 791cc dohc 'four', quad carburettors;
70bhp @ 8000rpm; 49lb ft @ 6000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones torsion bars, anti-roll bar rear live axle, trailing arms, coil springs, Panhard rod
Steering rack and pinion
Brakes discs front, drums rear
Weight 1556lb (706kg) 0-60mph 13.6 secs
Top speed 97mph Mpg 28

Price new £778 12s 9d Price now from £15k

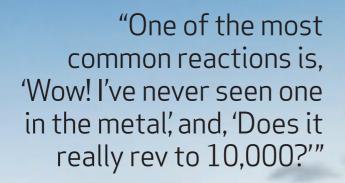
which was also available in coupé guise, and as the S800 in '65. An open car appeared at Earls Court in '66, and British sales commenced the following year. By that time the Honda featured a live rear axle (on the grounds of cost) and front disc brakes. *Motor Sport* was

impressed, suggesting that: 'The exciting lightalloy, roller-bearing, twin-cam engine is much more attractive than an iron pushrod power unit.' The S800 evolved into the S800M – aka the MkII – in 1968, gaining dual-circuit brakes, before production ended in 1970.

Philip Joisce has owned his 1969 Coupé for four years. "One of the most common reactions is, 'Wow! I've never seen one in the metal," he says. "Another is, 'Does the engine really rev up to 10,000?" And a tachometer marked up to 11,000rpm was an object of fascination for automotive writers of the 1960s. *Motor* thought that above 6000rpm the noise changed from 'slightly fussy to nearly hysterical', and the Honda does sound almost permanently frantic.

The cabin is compact and bijou, with the emphasis on the former, but Joisce regards the Honda's size as one of its many positives: "You can take a racing line without leaving your side of the road!" Half a century ago, countless drivers held similar opinions, and the 'world's fastest production 1-litre car' established the marque's reputation with four-wheel transport.











The fourth member in our group will be familiar to anyone acquainted with the *Motor* Road Test Annual 1969. The British motoring press extensively evaluated this Sunny 1000 B10 including Car in December 1968, which tested the Datsun opposite the Mitsubishi Colt 1100F beneath the memorably awful headline 'Some Orientals Analysed'. There was further evidence that the late '60s truly was another world in the main image, showing the cars being admired by Japanese tourists to the Tower of London.

The B10 was given its debut in April 1966 as Nissan's rival to the Toyota Corolla E10; the 'Sunny' name was selected in a competition that attracted an amazing eight million entries. OKJ 213F is one of a six-car line-up to be imported in June 1968, when the marque was such an unknown that the logbook cites 'Nissen-Datsun Concessionaires' (sic) as the Sunny's first owner.

It is believed to now be the sole British-market B10 saloon on the road, and after leaving the press fleet it was acquired by Rob Tann of AF Tann. The Datsun remained with the dealership

until 2000, when it was bought by the Nissan expert Eddie Rattley, and current owner Mark Ashbridge came by the B10 five years later. "It has light controls," he says, "and the gearbox is precise, as you would expect from a Datsun. The performance is quite perky thanks to the light weight and, while there is maybe a tendency to mild understeer, the handling is generally good." The 1000 is now fitted with radial-ply tyres, a modification recommended by Car to give the Sunny handling in the 'Escort/Viva class'.

The PR bumf proclaimed the B10 to be: 'A sturdy, comfortable and high performance "big car".' In the metal, the Datsun is a vehicle of remarkable charm. As with the Compagno, the Sunny almost revelled in its conventional engineering but, unlike the Daihatsu, it benefited from a cohesive marketing strategy. British sales of 'the £770 car that costs no more' were around 900, but they provided a foundation for Datsun in this country. Just three years after the B110series 1200 superseded the B10, the marque was second only to Renault as a UK importer.



plain from the front; roomy

profile; efficient 'four' makes 61bhp from sub-1000cc

DATSUN 1000 SUNNY (B10)

Sold/number built 1966-'69/409,696 **Engine** 988cc ohv 'four', single carburettor; 61bhp @ 6000rpm; 62lb ft @ 4000rpm **Transmission** four-speed manual, RWD **Suspension: front** independent, by wishbones, transverse leaf spring **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs Steering recirculating ball Brakes drums

Weight 1567lb (712kg) **0-60mph** 19.2 secs Top speed 79mph Mpg 34.2 Price new £766 10d Price now from £5000



A70-series Lancer was marketed under the Colt Car Company banner as 'A Tough New Breed of Car'. It first appeared in early 1973, and considerable publicity was derived from the Lancer of Joginder Singh and David Doig winning the Safari Rally in 1974 and '76.

As for the humbler entry-level version, with

model dates from 1974. The 1100F evaluated in

the 1960s was only testing the water, but the

As for the humbler entry-level version, with its 1.2-litre overhead-valve engine, it impressed no less a writer than *Car*'s George Bishop. He regarded the Lancer as demonstrating how: 'The old way of doing things still works very well for the undemanding everyday driver.' It was a formula that was guaranteed to appeal to a considerable sector of the motoring public, including those who had become jaded with the innovative (and spectacularly unreliable).

The A70 was replaced by the EX in 1979, and the early Lancer is now an eye-catching member of the Mitsubishi Motors UK heritage fleet. "The Colt has a nicely weighted clutch, reassuringly effective brakes and tidy handling," says Japanese car aficionado Darren Rungasamy, its pilot for the day. "There is a remarkable amount to like about the Lancer."

The coachwork conveys faint notes of Americana, especially around the C-pillars, and the brochure promised: 'Rugged durability and road-taming performance.' Most buyers would have been more impressed by the sweet gearchange and the array of fittings that included

tilt-adjustable steering. Plus the fact that it would cut a mild dash in the Fine Fare car park.

But for sheer cuteness, the Colt can't hold a candle to the youngest member of our group. The tiny Suzuki SC100's dimensions make the Datsun 1000 look Granada-sized – it seems to hover around your ankles. As its 970cc 'four' reverberates across the Buckinghamshire countryside, its surprising turn of speed causes many a startled glance from Mondeo owners, the engine note drawing to mind the frenetic whirr of an out-of-control spin dryer.

Suzuki launched the Giugiaro-styled Fronte Coupé in late 1971, and the Cervo of 1977 continued with the same formula on a slightly larger scale. British sales commenced in 1979, badged SC100, where the Suzuki was offered only in top-of-the-range GX guise – and marketed as the 'Whizzzzzzkid'. To quote *Motor*: 'No car we have ever tested has even approached this performance/economy compromise, especially at such a low price.'

The adverts claimed that the Whizzkid was fun, stylish and different, and for once this was not hyperbole. It especially appealed to those who mourned the impending demise of the Midget, and to would-be 911 owners. The Suzuki's top speed might have been more modest than a Porsche, but the layout was similar and it was easier to justify to the bank manager.

Suzuki GB has owned this ex-C&SC Whizzkid since 2003, and head of press and PR Alun Parry enjoys driving it whenever possible:

COLT LANCER 1200 (A70)

Sold/no built 1973-'79/n/a
Engine 1187cc ohv 'four', Mikuni-Solex carb;
69bhp @ 6300rpm; 70lb ft @ 4000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts rear live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs
Steering recirculating ball Brakes discs front, drums rear Weight 1698lb (770kg)
0-60mph 12.3 secs Top speed 93mph Mpg 30
Price new £1399 Price now from £5000

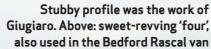


surprisingly tall. Other road users are often startled by how small it is, and how well it keeps up. I always drive it with the lights on, though, because it barely fills half a lane." When the SC100 was discontinued in 1982, some 4693 examples had found homes in the UK.

By that time, encountering a Japanese vehicle was as much a part of the daily routine as avoiding Crossroads on ITV. The curiosity aroused by Daihatsu in 1964 slowly developed into a social revolution, as consumers began to judge vehicles on their own merits, rather than nationality. For proof, simply compare a photo of virtually any British street taken in the early 1960s with one shot in the early 1980s.

Thanks to International Motors (imgroup.co.uk); Suzuki GB (suzuki.co.uk); Honda S800 Sports Car Club (hondas800sportscarclub.co.uk); Toyota GB (toyota.co.uk); Westcott Venture Park (westcottvp. com); Mitsubishi Motors (mitsubishi-motors.co.uk)







SUZUKI SC100 GX

Sold/no built 1978-'82/4693 (UK sales only) **Engine** 970cc ohc 'four', Mikuni-Solex carb; 47bhp @ 5000rpm: 61lb ft @ 2500rpm **Transmission** four-speed manual, RWD **Suspension** independent, at **front** by double wishbones with anti-roll bar acting as the lower link, coil springs rear semi-trailing arms, coil springs **Steering** rack and pinion Brakes discs front, drums rear Weight 1389lb (630kg) **0-60mph** 17.3 secs Top speed 82mph Mpg 42.4 Price new £2400 Price now from £5000

REFINEDTO

Sharing the seat of sports car legends and driving one of Enzo Ferrari's greatest





racers: the 1960 Le Mans-winning Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa





he art of marginal gains is knowing what to improve and how to improve it. That's the key, and this relies on experience. So while Jaguar burst on to the Le Mans scene in the 1950s, suddenly and with great success, it's easy to forget that, in the background, a certain team from Modena was building on its quarter-century of racing experience. By the end of the decade, the Scuderia punched a red-headed slingshot into the '60s with stunning ferocity.

The first Testa Rossa, fitted with a 180bhp four-cylinder engine and called the 500, was introduced in 1956, two years after the most recent Ferrari victory at La Sarthe (p124). With regulation changes in 1957 came the sleeker and Scaglietti-bodied TRC that Richie Ginther said was the easiest Ferrari yet to race.

Each year, marginal gains. The introduction of the 12-cylinder 3-litre came in 1958, and the famous 'pontoon' body was standardised after some prototypes the previous year. By this point Jaguar had burnt out, and Porsche and Aston Martin were looking to pick up the torch. The latter ditched its DBR4 Grand Prix programme and threw everything it could at its challenge for the World Sportscar Championship.

Yet Ferrari proved to have an all-rounder for all circuits and won four of the first five races, from Buenos Aires to the old airfield of Sebring, the dusty roads of Sicily, and on to Le Mans.

And so to 1959, when for the first time the Testa Rossa was no longer available for client

purchase and was only to be raced as a factory car. With coachwork by Pinin Farina, four examples were built including this, chassis 0774. During the season, Ferrari experimented with four- and five-speed 'boxes, and a de Dion rear axle. Finally, and probably as a reaction to the Jaguar C- and then D-type, four-wheel disc brakes were fitted at last (a marginal percentage gain significantly higher than 1%).

Chassis 0774 made its debut at Le Mans that year as part of the four-car works team of three TRs and one 196S. The objective? Keep Aston Martin and the now-ageing Jaguar D-type of

'Updated during the winter to '60 regulations, 0774 chased the new Maserati "Birdcage" for the first win of the season

Ecurie Ecosse away from the podium. Three privately entered '58 TRs and four 250GTOs bolstered the Prancing Horse's presence.

The three previous rounds of the 1959 season had been split: Ferrari claimed Sebring, Porsche the Targa Florio, and Aston Martin famously the Nürburgring. The Porsche 718's small engine rendered it uncompetitive at Le Mans, so it was

going to be between the DBR1 and Testa Rossa.

In the hands of Jean Behra and Dan Gurney, 0774 led practice, although grid position for the Le Mans start was based on engine capacity so smaller-engined cars didn't hold up the big boys. The whip-quick Stirling Moss got the best start in the Aston Martin, with 0774 struggling to get off the line and distant from the main pack. It took an hour of relentless chasing for Behra to get on to the tail of the leading Moss DBR1 and pass, handing over to Gurney to head the field into the darkness. Moss and Fairman dropped a valve after six hours but on went 0774, until the blistering early pace caught up with it. Just before the halfway point, either the gearbox failed (officially) or the engine gave up (what everyone actually saw happen) and the pair had to take solace in setting the race's fastest laps.

The engine problems had been due to oil starvation, which led to the cars being converted to dry-sump lubrication ahead of the final round of the World Sportscar Championship, September's six-hour RAC Tourist Trophy at Goodwood. The title fight was still very much an open book, with Porsche, Ferrari and Aston Martin all in a position to win. And, for the first time, full points were on the table; in 1958, the TT had been only four hours and therefore only half championship points were on offer.

Ferrari arrived in West Sussex at the top of the scoreboard on 18 points, with Aston Martin two adrift on 16 and Porsche a further point back. The Venezuelan Grand Prix was still to come, but none of the teams had made any arrangements on the assumption it wasn't going ahead.





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Goodwood being such a fast circuit Porsche knew it was up against it, meaning another head to head between Ferrari and Aston Martin. Phil Hill and Cliff Allison would drive 0774, while the usual Aston Martin suspects of Moss and Roy Salvadori were in the lead DBR1 and claimed pole position. Hill and Allison struggled for pace and 0774 was down the ladder in sixth.

As usual, the energetic Moss was first to his car and off into the distance, with 0774 left to crawl around the first lap with a broken valve and retire. With Ferrari down from four cars to three before the race had properly got going, only a miracle could pull victory from the jaws of defeat. Aston Martin truly kicked that miracle into touch when, during the pitstops, it pulled a trump card with built-in pneumatic jacks that saved around 7 secs per visit.

It didn't all go Aston's way – a hasty mechanic spilled petrol on an exhaust manifold and Moss' DBR1 went up in flames, along with the entire Aston Martin pit. Regardless of the smoky drama, Moss moved to the sister DBR1 to clinch

the race and Aston's Championship, making its withdrawal from racing even more surprising.

Updated during the winter to 1960 regulations and re-designated 250TR 59/60, 0774 was to be driven by Hill and Allison at the season opener in Buenos Aires for the 1000km, where it joined stablemate 0770 in the works squad. Flagged away by Juan Manuel Fangio, 0774 chased the new Maserati 'Birdcage' of Gurney but the promise of a race-long Ferrari vs Maserati duel faded at half distance. The Tipo 61 retired with gearbox problems, leaving 0774 to score the first win of the season.

Seven weeks later, at bumpy old Sebring, the tension between the race organisers and the teams intensified. In Argentina it had been about the new tall windscreens, which the drivers announced publicly to be dangerous; in Florida it was being forced to use the fuel supplied by event sponsor Amoco. This was unacceptable to both Ferrari and Porsche, who were contracted to Shell and BP respectively. Enzo Ferrari,





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in a fit of pique, withdrew his entries and threatened not to take part in any more races in the Championship except Le Mans.

Eventually, Ferrari and Porsche re-classified themselves as private entrants (in the case of Ferrari this was under the banner of Luigi Chinetti's NART, its North American importer). The driver line-ups reflected the American private entries, with 0774 now being driven by Ginther and Chuck Daigh. As the Maserati of Moss bogged down getting off the line, the TRs made good starts and rapid amateur Pete Lovely led Ginther. It wouldn't last: Moss soon recovered to lead until transmission problems, 0774 retired with more engine woes, and Porsche eventually took a 1-2 ahead of Lovely and fellow amateur teammate Jack Nethercutt.

Everyone (read: Enzo) had calmed down by the Targa Florio in early May, probably because it was a race taking place on home turf. Ferrari arrived with a small army of cars, including 0774 as the back-up. Conditions were especially tricky, with Saharan sand – supposedly fallout from the French nuclear test – mixing with rain. A crash in practice for one TR meant 0774 was pressed into action, to be driven by Allison and Ginther. By the end of the third lap Allison was up to third place, but Ginther and 0774 later left the track and ultimately the race.

The focus was always Le Mans, though, the final round of the 1960 World Sportscar Championship. Ferrari trailed Porsche, so the Italians had to win the race to take the title.



'With the morning came fine weather, and 0774 was recorded in first position at every hour from two to 24'

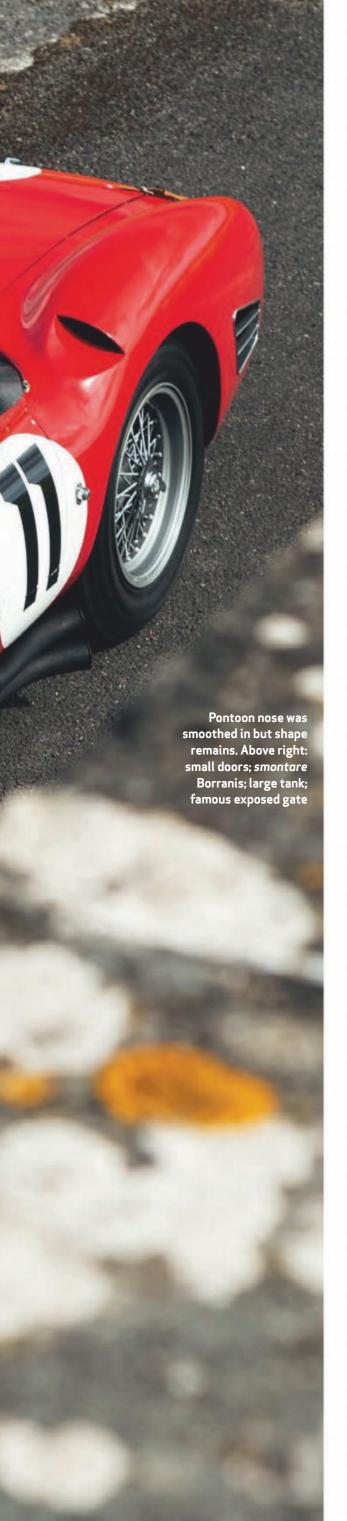
Thus, four works 250 Testa Rossas were entered, backed up by a NART entry, with a further seven privateer Ferraris running in the 3-litre GT class to total 12 Prancing Horses in the 55-car field. The privately entered Aston Martin DBR1s were a threat, as well as the all-new Jaguar E2A. Wearing race number 11, 0774 went to the Belgian duo of Olivier Gendebien and Paul Frère. Jim Clark in the Border Reivers DBR1 made the best getaway, but a Maserati led lap one and continued to pull away from the chasing Ferraris, which had settled down to occupy positions second through sixth during the first hour. By the second, the Maserati drew into the pits, wouldn't restart, lost the lead and fell back.

Two works Ferraris fell in quick succession, both stopping far from the pits due to poor fuel calculations, and the remaining hope was divided between 0774 and the NART-entered TR of the prodigiously talented Ricardo Rodríguez and Belgian teammate André Pilette.

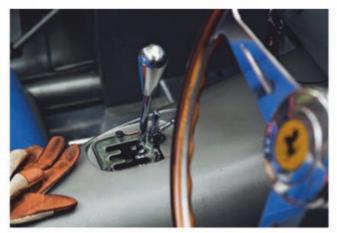
When the heavens opened, drivers streamed into the pits for cushions so they could stick their heads over the rain-drenched glass. Gendebien and Frère kept plugging away in 0774, leading through the darkness, and when the rain ceased the normal racing rhythm returned. With the morning came fine weather and 0774 settled into a comfortable lead, crossing the line four laps clear and having been recorded in first position at every hour from two to 24, in the process reclaiming the World Championship.

There was one final race for 0774. The factory













overhauled the car, sold it to Eleanor von Neumann, and Phil Hill raced it for her at Riverside in October. The usual suspects were there – Moss in a Lotus 19 Monte-Carlo, Salvadori in an Ecurie Ecosse Cooper Monaco T59 Climax, Joakim Bonnier in a Porsche 718 RSK and Jack Brabham in the Jaguar E2A – yet local hero Billy Krause won in a Maserati Tipo 61. Hill and 0774 came a sober seventh.

Life after Ferrari has been relatively quiet for 0774, which probably explains why it remains so original. Von Neumann sold 0774 to Tom O'Connor's Rosebud Racing Team in Texas, and the engine was promptly removed and installed into a Lotus 19 that was crashed in 1963 by Innes Ireland. The team disbanded, the engine was donated to a local college and the rolling chassis was given to Ireland, who sold it along with a Bentley 3 Litre to Anthony Bamford. The Ferrari collector then had his fast friend Willie Green fit a 250LM engine, before the car eventually found its way to Colin Crabbe, who raced it for four years – including at a Le Mans support event in 1973. Whenever asked about the TR, Crabbe proudly recalls how his wife, Fiona, used to use it to go to the shops. A Le Mans winner in the car park of Waitrose.

By 1977 it was owned by Paul Pappalardo, who reunited 0774 with its original engine and sent the car back to Maranello for a full restoration to 1960 specification. He regularly used the TR at historic racing and concours events until he sold it to the current custodian in 2004.

Since then, it has been seen at events all over the world, including most recently the 2019 Goodwood Revival, where it took part in the 1959 TT Celebration that included an evocative smoke display referencing the Aston Martin pit fire. Today, though, on a warm autumn day, we're using the small test track at Bicester Heritage so the only interference will be the odd

whir of the airfield's glider pulley between runs.

To gain access, you pull a skeletal door before dropping down into the blue cloth seat. The car is enveloping, the gauges big and clear, all as though you are in a tiny submersible looking out into a different world. The driving position is comfortable, with pedals, steering wheel and gearlever exactly where you would want them.

Pressing the starter button, the motor turns over for a few seconds longer than perhaps comfortable before the 12 cylinders detonate into life. And what a sound! The angels and archangels of motorsport singing praise to their god. With the TR already warmed up, first gear is engaged and it moves off on to the short and technical track, with only one brief straight to really open up the engine. The gearbox is a surprise: rather than being Lotus-like, light and nimble, it is heavier. Like a DB 'box, although the weight doesn't stop its well-oiled accuracy.

At Goodwood in September, the owner said that the TR is deceptively easy to drive. We all consider the drivers in period to be superhuman for their feats of endurance, but it is soon obvious that the TR looks after its pilot. It is ridiculously user-friendly, and it doesn't become harder as the speed rises. The chassis transmits to you every single thing that it is doing, with no fuss or drama. It simply gets on with it. On the straight the 12-cylinder hymn builds, its army of divine choristers in full voice. It's breathtaking.

Those marginal gains, the little developments over the course of a few years, came to a triumphant head with the win for 0774 at Le Mans in 1960. From a 1950s peppered with success, Ferrari owned the first half of the new decade. And this car, chassis 0774, was at the very heart of Enzo's racing programme. It represents one of the great cars, built by one of the greatest works racing departments, during possibly its greatest era of racing.

he relationship between
Ferrari and Le Mans is a
paradox. By 1965, no
marque had mastered the
Circuit de La Sarthe better
than the already nine-time
winners. Not even Bentley.
No manufacturer had more consecutive wins,
either. Not even Alfa Romeo.

Half a century later, modern and casual fans consider there to be no relationship at all except for in the lower classes; Bentley, meanwhile, remains synonymous with Le Mans despite only three entries since 1930.

Ferrari also created the star of perhaps the greatest sports car racer nobody has heard of in Olivier Gendebien. He was near-unbeatable when the 1950s was being swapped for the '60s.

Even the marque's first win, little more than a year after Ferrari was formalised as a car-maker and four years since WW2 had ended, was special. Luigi Chinetti – winner of Alfa's last, 15 years earlier – raced Lord Selsdon's privateer 166MM to victory almost single-handedly in 1949. The 47-year-old Italian-living-in-America's opening stint ended at 4:26am, his second resumed an hour's catnap later until the flag. And it had been no plain-sailing cruise.

Five years later, Grand Prix winner José Froilán González teamed up with Maurice Trintignant and beat the Jaguars in a wet-weather epic. No other 375 Plus saw the finish. González hadn't eaten or slept, and was flagging, but prevailed to become the works Scuderia's double first winner; 'The Pampas Bull' had scored the company's maiden Formula One Grand Prix win at Silverstone in 1951, too.

Come 1958 and so began the Gendebien Years. Four wins in five races would follow; three with the great Phil Hill, the other with racing journalist Paul Frère. Rain played its role in '58, when Hill and Gendebien stroked their 250 Testa Rossa serenely to victory as others fell foul

of poor reliability and the terrible weather.

Gendebien and Frère, runner-up in the intervening and anomalous 1959 with Aston Martin, led all but one hour of the 1960 encounter. In '61, two upstart Mexicans in a NART-entered TR pushed the eventual winning Belgian and America's first World Champion Hill hard, only for a misfire to all but end the Rodríguez brothers' assault at 7am, when the lead gap was barely three seconds.

A year later, driving the one-of-one open-top 330TR/LM, Gendebien etched his name indelibly into the history books with a fourth win, one more than Woolf Barnato and Chinetti, and a third on the trot – a feat then matched only by Bentley's 'Babe'. Gendebien and Hill, himself now a three-time winner, into the Pantheon and

WAY BACK WHEN

Retracing Ferrari's history at La Sarthe, a place once ruled by Enzo's men

WORDS JACK PHILLIPS
PHOTOGRAPHY MOTORSPORT IMAGES

the as-yet only driver to win the F1 title and Le Mans in the same year, saw off all-comers for a five-lap win after another Rodríguez fight. Hill wouldn't be seen racing a Ferrari at Le Mans again, Gendebien there at all.

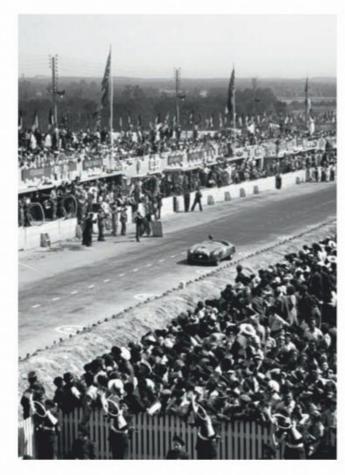
Ferraris locked out the top six in '63, a race down on entries but not on speed. Nobody had ever gone faster, and nobody had ever gone farther than the winning new 250P. Dashing Italian Grand Prix stars Lorenzo Bandini and Ludovico Scarfiotti took a patriotic 16-lap win.

It was the 1964 victory, less than 12 months after Enzo's nearly selling his company to Ford, that was perhaps the forerunner to Ferrari's demise. Five Ferraris finishing in the top six, led by Nino Vaccarella and Jean Guichet in a 275P, and no GT40s left running by 4pm Sunday, was chastening for Henry. Carroll Shelby was enlisted to beat *Il Commendatore* – Shelby's Fordengined Daytona being driven to fifth by Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant had, after all, been the snake among the Prancing Horses.

Rising star Jochen Rindt, nonplussed by Le Mans (and much else), provided the final hurrah in 1965 with the bespectacled Masten Gregory. From 11th on the grid. The GT40s struggled into retirement again, but so did Maranello's new 330P2s. The victorious 250LM was pushed on hard regardless of delays at the start – aided by the literally moonlighting Ed Hugus for one stint during the dead of night, according to some (including himself) – and chased the unexpectedly front-running Pierre Dumayentered 250LM until one of the French car's Dunlops gave up. Gregory assumed the lead and nursed his now-ailing LM home.

And with that, Ferrari would never trouble the scorers again for outright wins, able to beat Ford, Porsche or Matra elsewhere but never again at Le Mans, before slipping into the supporting cast. A variety including Daytonas and 512BBs, F40s and 333SPs, 360s and now 488s have claimed class honours since.





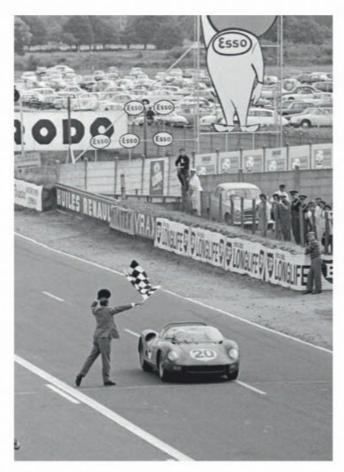
















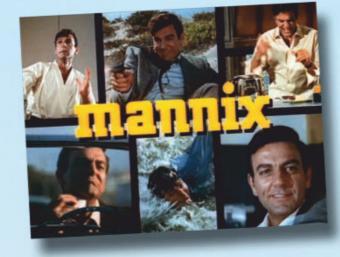


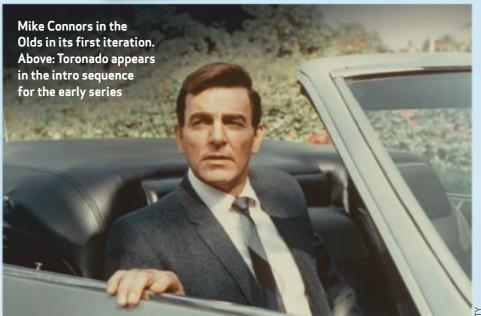


slice of TV cheese typical of its late-1960s origins, *Mannix* was eight seasons' worth of crime-busting, tyre-squealing adventure following the proven carchase/punch-up formula.

Deemed worthy only of insomniacs in the UK, this glossy action series always drew big primetime ratings in the USA, right through to when it was pulled in 1975, despite a general move towards grittier, more realistic '70s heroes.

Korean War veteran and karate black belt Joe Mannix was an LA-based private eye played by Mike Connors (1925-2017), who by 1967 had appeared in more than 20 films and made hundreds of TV appearances. With his lopsided smirk, the 42-year-old was a familiar face rather than a household name. It was television that made Connors famous, mainly thanks to Mannix. Featuring one of Lalo Schifrin's less memorable theme tunes, the series was produced by Lucille Ball's Desilu Productions and emanated from the same CBS/ Bruce Geller stable as Mission Impossible. In real life, Connors had a weakness for interesting cars and





was squiring around Hollywood in a Derby Bentley at the time he was offered the lead in *Mannix*. In fact, he later claimed it was the Bentley, bought from an English couple on a US road trip, that got him the part. When he visited Desilu Productions in the car, Lucille Ball's husband and business partner Desi Arnaz wanted to buy the Derby on sight and gave Connors the *Mannix* scripts to read.

From the beginning the character was supposed to drive a distinctive car, but for the first few episodes *Mannix* was seen using a variety of routine Mercury and Ford saloons.

Then, in episode three, he upped his game to a silver-and-black roadster of indeterminate make and model: a huge two-seater created for the series by George Barris.

As customiser to the stars (remember Sonny and Cher's Mustangs?), Barris needs little introduction: he was chiefly famous for his original Batmobile and the Munster Koach, and had enjoyed a close relationship with the film and TV industry since the '50s.

Given that the Mk1 Batmobile started life as an already fairly outrageous Lincoln show car, it is probably safe to say that the *Mannix*



TRANS KUSTOM CITY IOBII RIVERSIDE DRIVE NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.



Above, from top: drums hide behind chrome rims; Barris' signature; Taunus headlights. Below: Trans-Am-style rear



BUCKLEY'S FORGOTTEN PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS



HAZELL 1978-'79 TRIUMPH STAG

Co-written by football manager and pundit Terry Venables, *Hazell* was a short-lived but well-made and interestingly written series about a cockney copper turned private eye (Nicholas Ball) who generally eschews violence, preferring an easy life that earns him enough to keep up the payments on his Stag. Inevitably, he gets drawn into some hairy situations, memorably including an axe being impaled in the Triumph's bonnet by an irate husband.



HARRY O 1974-'76 AUSTIN-HEALEY SPRITE

Harry Orwell (played by jug-eared David Janssen) is another retired policeman who, having taken a bullet in the back in the line of duty, becomes a sleuth for hire, working out of a beachfront cottage between Santa Monica and Malibu. One of the running gags of this series was the unreliability of Harry's car, a faded 1966 Austin-Healey Sprite that gets very occasional road use but, most of the time, sits mockingly outside his house.



DICK BARTON 1948-'50 ALLARD K1

Dick Barton was the hero of millions of 1940s schoolboy listeners to the BBC Light Programme, who thrilled to the sound of the Devil's Gallop theme. With trusty assistants Jock and Snowy and his faithful Allard, special agent Barton took on the dastardly foes of post-war Britain. The Allard K1 remained in three Hammer Studios film versions, swapped for a pedestrian Riley Nine when Southern TV made its Dick Barton: Special Agent series in the late '70s.



PETER GUNN 1958-'61 PLYMOUTH SPORT FURY

An original television conception by Blake Edwards, *Peter Gunn* featured Craig Stevens in the role of the cultivated, jazz-loving detective, although many only remember the series for its superb Henry Mancini theme tune. There was nothing remarkable about him running big Chrysler products, from a DeSoto to a Plymouth Fury, but it's worth noting that *Peter Gunn* was one of the first to embrace what became a cliché of the genre: a carphone.



THE BIG SLEEP 1978 MERCEDES-BENZ 220 CABRIOLET

In the original film noir version of Raymond Chandler's book, the hero had a humdrum Plymouth. For his star-filled 1978 remake, set in the UK, director Michael Winner cast a 220 Cabriolet as Philip Marlowe's car of choice. It is established in the opening credits as Robert Mitcham (Marlowe) drives up the A1 to Knebworth, and something about these Mercs appealed to '70s filmmakers – John Voight drove one in *The Odessa File* a few years earlier.



VEGAS 1978-'81 FORD THUNDERBIRD

As the title suggests, Vegas (or VEGAS) was a series about a private investigator (Dan Tanna, played by Robert Ulrich) working in the famous Nevada gambling town. Apart from occasional cameo appearances by a very tired-looking Tony Curtis (playing a casino boss), the only really memorable thing about this series was Tanna's red 1957 Ford Thunderbird, which he parked inside his 'house' – actually the prop store of a casino.



BANACEK 1972-'74 PACKARD 180 DARRIN CONVERTIBLE

Banacek was from the same NBC 'Mystery Movie' stable as *Columbo*. The lead, a wealthy insurance investigator played by cigar-chomping George Peppard, was modelled squarely on Steve McQueen's *Thomas Crown Affair* character – he even lived in the same Boston town house that featured in the 1968 film. Banacek's everyday car was a chauffeur-driven Cadillac, but for fun – and to illustrate his connoisseurship – he drove the 1941 Packard.



MAN IN A SUITCASE 1967-'68 HILLMAN IMP

What could have been just another bit of good-natured ITC nonsense was made memorable by its star, the brooding method actor Richard Bradford playing wrongly discredited ex-CIA agent McGill. Prematurely grey, this beefy former American football star didn't make himself very popular with the stuntmen whose noses he occasionally broke, but it was all part of his realistic approach – as was the green Hillman Imp he usually drove.

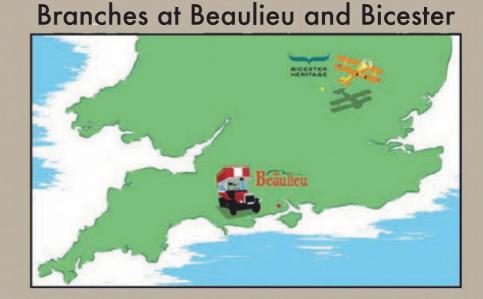


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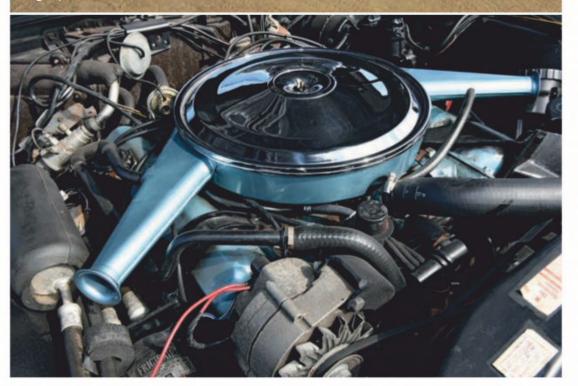
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roadster, based on a showroom-fresh Oldsmobile Toronado, was a greater stretch of his talents. The choice of a futuristic Toronado was probably linked to the high-tech feel of the series during its first season, when the character was not a freelance PI but part of an organisation that used computers to solve crimes.

Also, Barris had just produced a set of highly modified Toronados for the Esso display at the 1967 World's Fair. His choice of the front-wheel-drive Oldsmobile would not prove unique among the custom crowd, either: the 1969 Panthermobile was Toronado-based, too. There is some conjecture in my mind about the year of the car the *Mannix* roadster was based on – the exposed brake-drum wheels suggest a 1966, but the steering wheel says '67.

Whichever the case, Barris chopped the roof and, after removing the rear seats, covered the space with a giant glassfibre tonneau cover that hid a (rarely seen) hood and various spare crimefighting implements. The giant doors, then the longest on any production vehicle, were the only steel panels that Barris left standard.

Some 30 coats of semi-gloss Platinum Star metalflake paint were applied, with contrasting black reaching halfway up the doors and over the wheelarches. At the front, the pop-up lights were



'Fake spinners and faux side pipes hardly seemed ideal for a private eye who was presumably keen to keep a low profile' replaced by circular sealed-beams on either side of a bespoke grille, and the bonnet grew twin power bulges. With the slim bumperettes on the ends of the wings, this was perhaps the most effective part of a transformation that somewhat predicted the revised front-end look of the 1970 production Toronados.

Less convincing was the Pontiac Firebird-like lip spoiler on the rear deck and full-width taillight panel. Fake wheel spinners and faux side pipes hardly seemed ideal for a private eye who was, presumably, trying to keep a low profile.

The Toronado reprised its role in season two, by then with contrasting dark red on its lower flanks and with the circular headlamps changed for European-style, lozenge-shaped units believed to have come from a Ford Taunus. It was in this form that MPC Craft Master thought the *Mannix* roadster was worthy of a 1:25 scale plastic kit, now extremely rare.

Barris produced a second car for stunts, not that it featured in many of them because Mike Connors didn't like driving this full-sized frontdriver all that much, recalling in an interview that it "handled like a parade float".

'Our' *Mannix* roadster is the close-up car, spotted last year nestling among the exotica in Worldwide's Pacific Grove sale during



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Monterey Car Week in August. It looks marginally better in the metal than it does two-dimensionally, with a nose treatment that appears more Turin than Hollywood.

With 25,000 miles recorded it appears totally original, even down to its tyres. Since leaving *Mannix* in 1968 the Toronado has spent most of its time as a static exhibit, which accounts for its originality. The first civilian owner was a New York property developer who used it as an attraction at his amusement park. When that closed in the late '80s the car was auctioned to a Tennessee museum, but it came up for sale again in 2017 wearing a \$100-125,000 estimate.

Given that level of inactivity it runs quite well, and was completely tolerant of being hustled along the Monterey peninsula for pictures. Connors' thoughts on the handling probably relate more to the fact that the structure is not especially rigid with the roof removed – to be honest, even the standard car is marginal in that department. Inside, the dashboard, which shudders visibly over bumpy surfaces, is mainly stock Toronado, which means a barrel-type speedometer and no rev counter. There is no steering 'feel' to speak of and the car either floats and wallows on its original dampers or squeals and scrubs its tyres on every turn, although essentially it hangs on reasonably well. The grabby, sharp brakes need care if you don't want to lock up the rears in a plume of tyre smoke.

I didn't find the short-wave radio, but you can hardly miss the cream-coloured telephone nestling between the front seats. The centre armrest doubles as a locker for a pistol and the seats are, allegedly, heated.

Out on the road, onlookers gawp at the car, some with slowly dawning recognition of where they have seen it before. A few youngsters even cheer – relieved, perhaps, to see a vehicle in





Pins at the corners of the tonneau locate the flimsy hood

California that is not some pious eco statement but unashamedly wasteful and decadent.

The car probably hangs together better than the series itself when viewed today, although both have a certain ironic appeal. Squeaky-clean Connors is frequently beaten up (he was knocked unconscious 55 times), but gets brownie points for doing his own stunts: he was famous for barrel-rolling out of moving vehicles and, generally, coming up shooting, quiff intact.

Those recidivists our hero could not disarm with his tough-talking one-liners, he could bring around to his way of thinking with a readily brandished Walther PPK or a karate chop. About the only edgy thing about the show was the fact that Connors' Simca-driving secretary was one of the very few regular black characters on American television at the time.

There is no blood, sex or swearing in *Mannix*, where the action plays out in an eternally sunny world of conveniently positioned empty cardboard boxes on the Paramount Studios back lot, with regular forays out on to canyon roads for chase sequences that were not the strong suit of this bespoke roadster.

It was for this reason that it was pensioned off in season three in favour of a Dodge Dart GTS, also Barris-modified but much less conspicuous. Even in late-'60s la-la land, the idea of a private eye maintaining discretion in a 7-litre, 18ft-long, two-seater one-off convertible stretched credulity somewhat.

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WO Bentley and Frank Feeley helped Alan Good to revive Lagonda with a groundbreaking new V12

WORDS SIMON TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES MANN



he Best Car in the World

that had been RollsRoyce's claim since before
WW1. But when Alan
Good took over the ailing
Lagonda company in
1935 he assembled the
demoralised staff in the dilapidated little
factory in Staines and told them: "We are going
to build the best car in the world."

One of his first acts was to persuade WO Bentley to join him. When Rolls-Royce bought Bentley in 1931 WO was kept on simply because, as the marque's creator, his name was of marketing value as Rolls introduced its own Bentleys. He remained on the payroll, but he was given very little of any

importance to do. While the Rolls engineering team worked on the new V12 engine, he was left with mundane tasks. As a creative engineer, he was quietly unhappy.

So when Good approached him he agreed at once, without having driven a Lagonda, or indeed seen the factory. When he did he was rather shocked by its small size and ancient equipment after the grandeur of Rolls-Royce's Derby premises, although Good soon invested in expanding and updating it.

Lagonda had a well-deserved reputation for building strong, fast cars with a vintage feel. Its M45, powered by a bought-in Meadows six-cylinder engine, scored a brilliant win in the 1935 Le Mans 24 Hours, although by then the company was in serious financial trouble.







Feeley's Rapide design includes details such as (below right) styled fuel fillers and matching door and boot handles

Bentley's first task after the Good takeover was to update the M45, which he did most effectively. The Meadows engine remained, but the LG45 had a new, stiffer cruciform chassis frame with lighter steering and an improved gearbox. The suspension was less hard, yet the handling was much improved. And the styling displayed a significant advance on the traditional tourer shape of its predecessor. The tall Lagonda radiator and big headlights continued, but the doors, instead of being cutaway, were shoulder height with a moulding line running along them and curving down to the swept tail.

This was the work of a young man called Frank Feeley, who had been the junior assistant to Lagonda's long-time head of body design, Walter Buckingham. Soon after the takeover







Buckingham left and Feeley, at the age of 24, found himself in charge of how Lagondas should look. He was to continue in that role for Lagonda and then Aston Martin until the late 1950s, creating a succession of dramatic and beautiful shapes, until the company moved to Newport Pagnell. Feeley decided that he didn't want to emigrate to Buckinghamshire, and the car world lost him to the aircraft industry.

The LG45 was a formidable motor car, and the works entered two uprated versions for the 1936 Rallye Monte-Carlo. Good drove one with his wife Doreen, herself an experienced rally driver. Black ice sent them off the road in Latvia, but the other car finished 41st.

After being quite conservative with the LG45 Feeley was allowed free rein with the flamboyant LG45 Rapide, which arrived in time for the 1936 Motor Show. With its outside exhausts, Art Deco side moulding and swept tail, it created a sensation. Its abbreviated wings carried the central crease – 'Feeley's gothic arch' – that would become his trademark through to the Aston Martin DB3S 20 years later. Critics felt it was too flash and called it a Promenade Percy's sports car, but its performance was as good as its looks. In Sanction 3 form the Meadows engine made 150bhp, giving a top speed of 107mph.

Meanwhile, WO answered Alan Good's call to build the best car in the world by designing his own V12 engine. The Rolls-Royce V12 had appeared in the new Phantom III at the 1935 Motor Show. At a massive 7.3 litres, with its peak power of only 160bhp developed at a mere 3000rpm, it was intended for luxury saloons and limousines, and its pushrod valvegear and long stroke did not impress WO. Nor did the rumours of its hydraulic tappets being unreliable. He was determined to produce an engine which was better engineered than that of his former employer, and indeed far ahead of anything from anyone else.



The Lagonda V12 was announced at the 1936 Motor Show – barely 15 months after the takeover – and the single saloon on the stand was certainly not production-ready. Lagonda historian Arnold Davey believes that some of the engine's internals "had been knocked up in the carpenter's shop", and the first production cars were not delivered until the spring of 1938. But the engine was heralded as a marvel, and it remains WO Bentley's finest achievement.

The cylinder dimensions of its 4.5 litres were comparatively short-stroke at 75 x 83mm, giving lower piston speeds and allowing the unit to rev to 5500rpm, a high figure for a big engine in those days. The twin overhead camshafts, one for each bank, were driven by a train of gears and two short chains, and twin horizontal SU

carburettors sat within the vee. There were many unusual features, including two oil pumps running at different pressures, one for the bottom end and one for the top. Two distributors were driven off the camshafts, with two coils serving six cylinders each. There were no big-end bearings as such: the conrods ran directly on the nitride-hardened crankshaft. Shields over the exhaust manifolds directed hot air out of big grilles along the sides of the bonnet.

Earl Howe took the prototype, a substantial four-door saloon, to Brooklands and put 100 miles into an hour, despite stopping for nearly three minutes to change a punctured tyre. Its fastest lap was timed at in excess of 108mph, an extraordinary speed for a big touring car more than 80 years ago.

Once teething troubles with the earliest cars had been dealt with, this complex highperformance engine seems to have been totally reliable, although for the cautious customer Meadows-engined versions of each body style remained in production at a substantial £400 cheaper. Independent front suspension was by torsion bars and wishbones, and the big Lockheed hydraulic brakes had dual circuits. Three chassis lengths were available, and the V12's silence and smoothness were ideal for a high-speed saloon – making it a strong rival to the Bentley, which gave WO some satisfaction. Indeed the great majority of V12s sold were four-door saloons and elegant drophead coupés, plus a handful sold in chassis form for coachbuilders to fit bespoke bodies.

But the ultimate V12 was the new Rapide, introduced for the 1938 Show. Feeley excelled himself with a stunning sports car that was elegant and yet dashing, and has to be one of the most stylish pre-war cars of all. It cannot have been easy to accommodate the huge radiator in such a curvilinear car, but it works perfectly. This time the side moulding, accentuated by a chrome

spear, dived across the rear wheel spats. The front wings – with the Feeley crease, of course – were echoed by twin fairings each side of the radiator over the horns. These fairings appeared on all the V12s, and going round the '35 show Leslie Hore-Belisha, the Minister of Transport (and initiator of Belisha beacons), publicly voiced criticism because, in his view, they resembled a woman's breasts. That wasn't what Feeley had been thinking about at all.

Despite its phenomenal performance, the Rapide was a very fully-equipped touring car, with wind-up windows, luxurious trim, one-shot chassis lubrication and built-in jacks at each corner. It was optimistically advertised as a four-seater, because the wide bench seat could accommodate three at a pinch, and behind there was a small sideways-facing seat that folded away to carry luggage.

Of 189 Lagonda V12s, only 12 Rapides were built before the Second World War intervened. Two V12 sports-racers, with skimpy lightweight bodies and four-carburettor engines, were entered for Le Mans in 1938 and despite very little testing finished third and fourth. Improved versions would have run in 1940 had the race taken place. Meanwhile Good tried to buy ERA, planning to make a Grand Prix car using the V12 engine, but this came to naught.

By the time the war was over life was very

different. The V12's day had ended, and WO turned his skills to designing a twin-cam straight-six of 2.6 litres. By 1947 Good was gone, turning his unflagging energies to other things, and a few months later Bentley followed him. Lagonda was bought by David Brown, who amalgamated it with Aston Martin, and WO's six-cylinder unit became its mainstay for the following decade.

Charles Good is Alan's nephew, and he has two Lagondas: the actual LG45 tourer that his uncle and aunt drove in the 1936 Rallye Monte-Carlo, and one of those dozen

WHO WAS LAGONDA SAVIOUR ALAN GOOD?

This was a huge man, in personality and in stature – he stood 6ft 5in tall and weighed more than 20 stone. His voice, said one friend, was "a nectarine bass that could bull-roar invective or break into rollers of Rabelaisian mirth." After reading law at Oxford he became a solicitor, but his entrepreneurial spirit soon took over. Still in his 20s, with prodigious energy and self-confidence, he built up a reputation as a 'company doctor', raising capital to rescue failing firms and turning them back to profit.

His daily drive was a Lagonda, and he pricked up his ears when he heard that its maker was in trouble. In April 1935 a receiver was appointed, and the whole business was put up for sale.

Bids came from Alvis and Singer, and Rolls-Royce put in a tender, keen – as it had been with Bentley in 1931 – to take another competitor out of the market. But Good, who was then just 29, raised enough capital from a merchant bank to outbid them. He got Lagonda for £71,000, probably about £4.5million today. That doesn't seem expensive, but it indicates that many thought Lagonda was past saving. He'd had to up his bid a little because the receiver decided that the Le Mans win a few

weeks earlier had increased the brand's value.

Having installed WO Bentley and hired Dick Watney from Rootes as managing director, Good revitalised Lagonda. His remarkable ability to pull his staff into a team and motivate them extended to the workers on the shop floor, a rare skill in those days. At the same time he continued to pursue a multitude of other projects, in particular taking over companies making industrial and nautical power units and amalgamating them into a dominant group based on diesel power generation.

Good's contribution to the war effort through his various companies was immense: nine million shells, 250,000 rockets, 6000 flame-throwers, plus gun turrets for tanks and undercarriages for bombers. Meanwhile, WO Bentley quietly worked on a 2.6-litre twin-cam 'six', and with the coming of peace the new Lagonda saloon was very quickly ready to go.

But the recently-arrived Labour government was not interested in allocating steel to luxury car makers, which made it virtually impossible to get the new car into production. In March 1947 Good's patience ran out and he moved on. Lagonda was sold to David Brown for just £52,000, less than £2million in today's money. That was something of a bargain, although all Brown really wanted was WO's new engine for his Aston Martins.

Good continued to direct his towering energies towards his clutch of specialist engineering companies, his now near monopoly in the diesel engine market and also the aviation industry, becoming chairman of Folland Aircraft. He even found time for his magnificent house and 1250-acre park in Oxfordshire, his 22,000 acres of moorland in Scotland and his priceless collection of French antique furniture.

But his relentless workload took an increasing toll on his health. Good worked on, ignoring the advice of his doctors, and in February 1953, aged just 46, he died. One of his obituaries said: 'He packed more energy, more work and more drive into his working years than could be claimed by a dozen octogenarians'.



The LG45 and the V12
Rapide were built only three years apart, yet they seem to come from entirely different eras

magnificent V12 Rapides. Charles' father was killed in an air crash when he was only five, and Uncle Alan became his father figure – only to die himself 13 months later. Charles has owned a lot of cars in his life, from 4½ Litre Bentley to 7-litre Cobra, but he has now downsized his collection to just his pair of Lagondas. They make a fascinating contrast when we exercise them together on the byways of Hampshire.

In the LG45 the big Meadows engine is as strong as an ox, and its bottomless torque makes it very easy to drive – helped by the fact that a previous owner converted the pedals to move the centre throttle to the right of the brake. The steering is high-geared, but light and accurate once you are on the move. There is only synchromesh on third and top, but if you judge the revs correctly the right-hand lever snicks satisfyingly from gear to gear.

To give more snow clearance, the two 1936 Rallye Monte-Carlo team cars were built with



the open flowing wings of the earlier cars rather than the more substantial wings on all other LG45s, and they add grace to the car. With its narrow cockpit and high seating position it feels very vintage, but it has ample room for four. The suspension is not harsh, the brakes are reassuring, and as you look down the long bonnet to that tall radiator, flanked by its big P100 lamps, the car feels all of a piece. You'd happily emulate Alan Good in this very car and set out from Tallinn for Monte-Carlo.

Getting from the LG45 to the V12 Rapide is a revelation. The cars were built three years apart, but the V12 seems at least two decades younger. It's all down to WO's magnificent engine. It is turbine smooth, and when I first punch the starter button I almost push it again, and have to glance at the rev-counter to know it is ticking over. Under way, there is not the immediate torque of the straight-six: this engine likes to rev, and once you approach 3000rpm the

power comes in with a silky swoosh. It's a big car, but as the revs rise it shrinks around you and starts to feel agile and quick.

The steering is quite low-geared, but very precise, and the ride feels much more modern, the torsion-bar front suspension unabashed by bumpy British B-roads. The big central gearlever looks ungainly but in fact the travel



The LG45's Meadows engine is a traditional straight-six

between the gears is short and it is light to use. The brakes have a long pedal but pull up the Rapide's 1450kg confidently.

The two-tone red on Charles' car was part of an American restoration some time ago, but it looks spectacular in the metal and suits the shape well. In 1938 this was not a car for introverts.

It bristles with pleasing Feeley details: the long, tapering door and boot handles, and the twin fuel-filler caps that echo the radiator cap. The windscreen mounts curve neatly up to the glass, which folds flat if required. Even the angle of the side windows' trailing edge is exactly right.

At the 1938 Motor Show, as luck would have it, the Lagonda and Bentley stands were side by side. The Rapide's list price was £1600; the Park Ward drophead next door was £1805. Rolls-Royce's Wraith saloon was £1610. Alan Good was biased, of course, but he believed that, with the help of Messrs Bentley and Feeley, he had indeed built the best car in the world.





Meeting Markku Alén, one of the greatest rally drivers without a World Championship to his name

WORDS RICHARD HESELTINE PHOTOGRAPHY MOTORSPORT IMAGES

e offers a look of solidarity but it may have been a wince. It's hard to tell. A queue is forming, our minder proffering a smile that reads: 'Let's wrap this up quickly.'

Markku Alén is straining to be heard over the throng of well-wishers and hero-worshippers wanting to get close to one of rallying's most charismatic superstars. It's as though a seismic disturbance has unsettled the air, but then we are in the middle of the Caramulo Motorfestival. The Finn famously won the Portuguese Rally five times, a feat not lost on the 40,000 spectators carrying national flags, models, photos and hats for him to sign. This is no longer an interview, more a case of him being shelled with questions posed at larynx-shredding volume.







Fast-forward a few hours and we're at a reception in an art museum, and able to finish what we started. Our hero appears relaxed, if a little tired. "I love it here. I always went well in Portugal," he says. "I did the rally 15 times and only retired once. There were certain rallies on which I always did well, but also some – such as Monte-Carlo – that, for whatever reason, I didn't seem able to win. I finished on every step of the podium apart from the one that matters."

Alén was, for two decades, the most exciting man to watch in the World Rally Championship. His personality drove him, inexorably, to take up the fight more fiercely than anyone else. At least, that's how it appeared from the outside. During broadcasts of the RAC Rally of Great Britain, each time a microphone was shoved in his face at a rest halt, he was invariably asked what his plans were for the next stage. Just as night follows day, he would tender an unblinking death stare before uttering: "Now we go maximum attack!"

And he did. Alén never claimed the World Championship for Drivers, but he held the crown for 11 days in 1986 before it was controversially taken away from him. Nevertheless, he won 19 rounds of the WRC from 129 starts, and secured the 1978 FIA Cup for Drivers, the precursor to the World Championship. He also held the record for most stage wins – 801 – until Sébastien Loeb eclipsed it in 2011. Given that his father was a champion ice racer it is not surprising that Alén became a wheelman, but he claims that this didn't influence his decision to take up motorsport.

"My heroes growing up were Timo Mäkinen, Pauli Toivonen and Hannu Mikkola," he explains. "They were the original 'Flying Finns'. When I was 16 years old, I watched the 1000 Lakes as a spectator. That was in 1967. I watched these guys and knew then that I wanted to drive rally cars. I had done some karting, and some things with motorcycles, but this excited me more. As soon as I got my driving licence I was out there competing. My first event was the Hankrally [Snow Rally]. I finished second. When I was 18, I won the 1969 Finnish Junior Cup and the following year I was competing on the same events as the stars I looked up to. It was pretty amazing. It all happened very quickly."

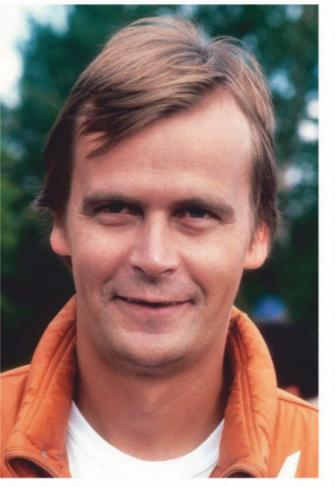
Having started out in a Renault 8 Gordini, it was aboard a Sunbeam 900 (Imp) that Alén made an impression. His hero, 1968 European Rally Champion Toivonen, was instrumental in him making the leap from amateur to professional: "I bought the Sunbeam from him and he took an interest in me. He was a hard guy, you know? He was tough, and I learned a lot."

Following an impressive outing in a borrowed Group 1 Opel Kadett on the 1970 1000 Lakes, which ended with the biggest accident of his career, he bagged a drive with the Finnish Volvo concessionaire under the Marlboro Racing Team Finland banner. However, it was in 1973 that he rocketed into the spotlight.

He had driven a David Sutton-fielded, Clarke & Simpson-livered Ford Escort on that year's Lindisfarne Rally, but for the RAC Rally of Great Britain he was armed with a Motorcraft RS1600. His appearance has long-since entered into legend. Leaving the road in Sutton Park on the opening day, he and wingman Ilkka Kivimäki dropped to 177th place. Cue an epic comeback drive: "We went off at a very fast part of the stage; the same corner where Mikkola had

crashed. A lot of people left the road there. We were in fifth gear, really going fast, and then we went head over heels into the trees. The car looked bad, but the spectators were able to help push it towards the road. Then Tony Fall went off at the same spot and ended up where our car had been moments earlier. They then had to move his car for safety reasons so we lost a lot of time before we were able to get going again. We were fastest on the next stage, though."

Despite another 'moment' on the final day, the youthful duo came home third. The 22-year-old Alén was subsequently inundated with offers of factory drives, and in 1974 he was a works man for Ford *and* Fiat. "I think I was the only driver to be with two teams, but ultimately I had to



make a choice," he recalls. "My deal with Ford was only for a part-season, but Fiat wanted me to do more and more events. The Escort was a fantastic car, but the works team already had the Finnish mafia [Mäkinen, Mikkola *et al*] and Roger Clark so I decided to go with Fiat." Pause for dramatic effect. Smile. "Of course, it helped that they offered me more money!"

Strong results came in thick and fast, and Alén claimed his maiden WRC win in Portugal in '75 at the wheel of a Fiat 124 Abarth Rallye. A year later he was piloting a 131 Abarth: "That was so much better than the 124, which was a road car altered for rallying. The 131 was the opposite. I worked closely with [development driver] Giorgio Pianta on the car and we did a lot of testing in the run up to each rally. Preparation was fantastic. We also had a lot of help and support from Pirelli. It was a big step up. I won the 1976 1000 Lakes [the first of six victories on his home event] and again in Portugal in 1977."

Dovetailing his 1978 outings in the 131 and a Lancia Stratos HF to take the FIA title, his wins included the Giro d'Italia automobilistico in the Dino-engined supercar: "I had driven against the Stratos many times, so it was great to finally do some events in one. I couldn't believe how easy it was, although I was too tall – I was always hitting my head on the roof."

Further seasons would feature him jumping between Fiat 131s and Lancias, before the newly combined operation under parent company Fiat handed him a fresh weapon: the Lancia 037. Having blooded the supercharged Group B machine on the non-WRC Rally Costa Smeralda in '82, the following three campaigns would see him put in emphatic performances as he fought Audi quattros and then Peugeot 205 T16s.

"I am not sure if it was the best car I ever drove, but it was my favourite," he admits. "It was also the only one I never rolled... I loved the 037, but not having four-wheel drive cost us on gravel. On Tarmac, it was unbelievable; just







fantastic. I won the Tour de Corse with an 037 in 1983 and '84, and was very proud of those results. The Delta S4 that came next was a very different type of car. Of course, we now had four-wheel drive and a lot more horsepower, but I wouldn't say I enjoyed driving it as much as the 037. We did our first rally in that car at the end of 1985 [he was second to teammate Henri Toivonen on the RAC Rally of Great Britain]: I knew we had a car to fight Peugeot."

The 1986 season was, however, one to forget. During the first half of his campaign he had little to show for his efforts, save second place in Sweden. In Portugal there had been a driver revolt over crowd safety, while in Corsica his car was withdrawn following the deaths of Toivonen and his co-driver Sergio Cresto. Thanks to retirements on the Monte and in Greece, it didn't appear as though he had a shot at the WRC title. Results improved, however, and having contested each round he arrived for the Sanremo just 22 points behind Peugeot rival Juha Kankkunen, with 20 points on offer for victory. With only Sanremo's final Tarmac leg left to run, the three 205 T16s were controversially excluded. Chief scrutineer Lanfranco Caneschi considered the cars' protective undertrays to be illegal; that they were actually in place to provide extra downforce. Given that even Lancia team boss Cesare Fioro opined that they weren't, Alén's victory was devoid of glory. He then placed second in Britain and won the Olympus and the drivers' title. But the subsequent annulment of the Sanremo results following a successful protest by Peugeot Talbot Sport crowned Kankkunen instead.

"I still don't know the full story of what happened," admits Alén. "I don't know if politics



"I loved Group B. I liked the power. The driver made the difference. In Group A, you had only 300bhp and it was boring"

came into it, but I never understood why the Sanremo people didn't let the Peugeots complete the rally and then throw them out. It made no sense to drop them so late in the rally. By not letting them finish, and with the Peugeot team's protest then being successful, they couldn't simply reinstate them in the results. If they had, I might have finished second to Juha and perhaps still have won the title. Who knows? It was handled very badly. I have no problem with Juha, but it isn't a happy subject for me."

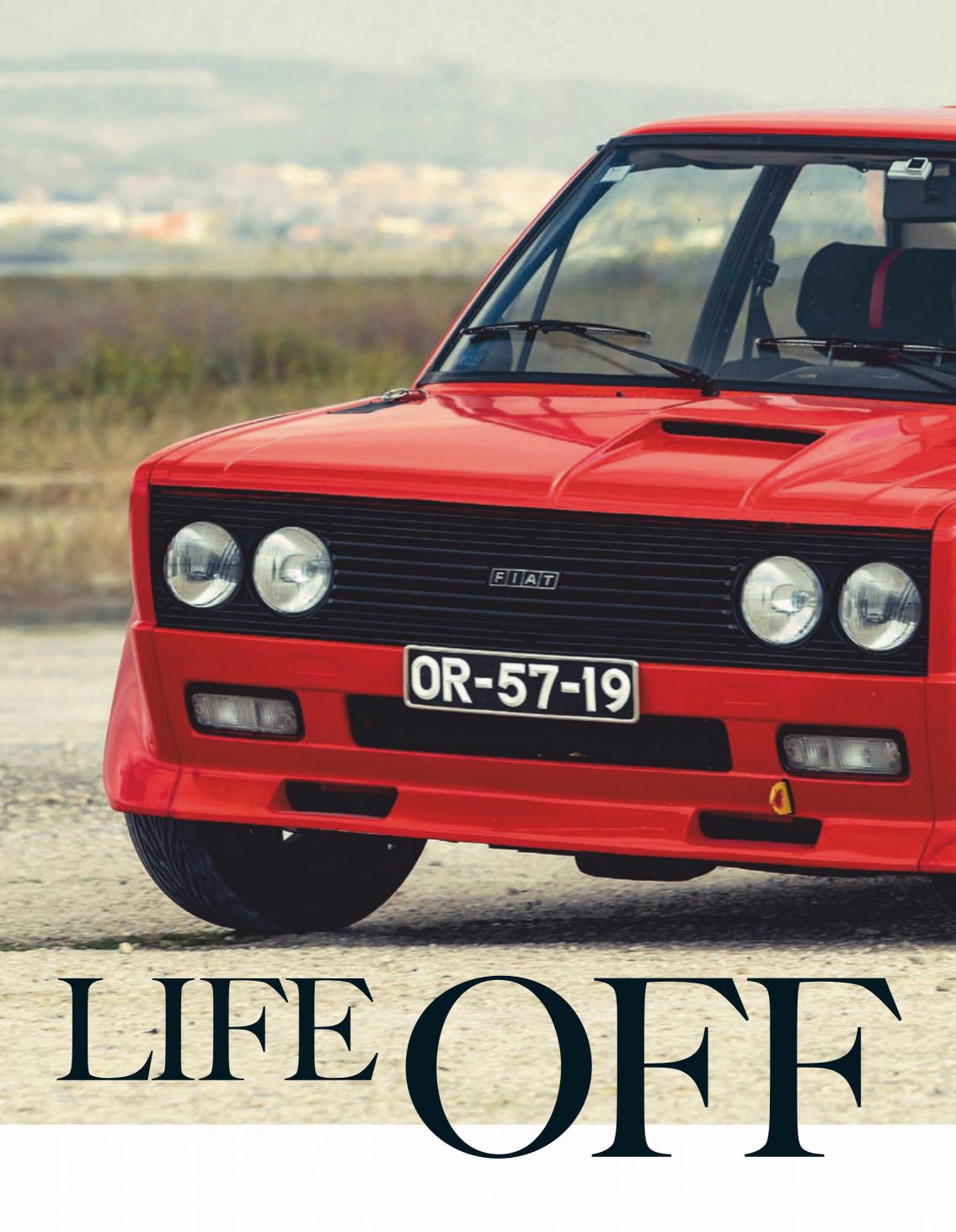
Group B was abruptly axed at the end of 1986 because of safety concerns, with Group A becoming the top-flight class for '87. Alén isn't convinced this was the right approach: "I loved the Group B cars. I liked having the power. It meant the driver made the difference. In Group A, you had only 300bhp and it was boring," he adds, mimicking driving with one finger.

Nevertheless, Alén won at the helm of the Martini-livieried Delta 4WD and Integrale – and more than once, claiming his last WRC victory on the 1988 RAC Rally of Great Britain. A partial season in 1989 followed by drives with Subaru and Toyota rounded out his frontline career, although he continued to rock up in everything from the DTM in a semi-works Alfa Romeo 155 to the Andros Trophy ice-racing series, via driving big rigs on the Dakar Rally.

More recently, he has helped hone several Ferrari production cars as a development driver, while also fronting a TV show in his homeland where he pushes vowel-laden exotics to their limits. By way of a parting shot, a clumsily asked question is met with a look of incredulity. That, and laughter: "Was I ever scared in a car? No. Well, not when I was driving." Pause. "I was never scared in a rally, but perhaps in a race. I remember being uncomfortable when I did Le Mans in a Lancia Beta Montecarlo Turbo in 1980. I didn't feel at home. Going down the Mulsanne Straight flat-out, I thought, 'What am I doing here?' That's the only time."

And with that, the curtain descends on the interview, but not before he acquiesces to one final request. Please say it. Go on, you know you want to. "Okay, maximum attack!"

Thanks to Sara Bravo and Alexandre Amorim





Made famous by Alén and coveted by all, the Fiat-Abarth 131 Rally still shines

WORDS RICHARD HESELTINE PHOTOGRAPHY MANUEL PORTUGAL



he backdrop screams 'urban cool', if by that you mean there's lots of concrete, graffiti and a couple of characters who either want to hug you or stab you. Unfortunately, the road has no surface as such, just massive potholes between stretches of vegetation sprouting out of the asphalt, and you don't want to drop a Campagnolo in a crater. 'Our' Fiat-Abarth 131 Rally is highly prized, and highly strung with it.

You nail the throttle and channel your inner Markku. The first run results in a bravura display of semi-controlled drifting. Next time through the battery light flickers just as you boot it out of a bend. The revs die and it understeers like a wayward shopping trolley, the driver's seat offering surprisingly little by way of lateral support despite appearances to the contrary. A third ends much the same, as does the fourth.

Time was when this was a car for heroes. Autocar labelled it: 'A strange mixture of the clever, the brash, and the sophisticated.' That was in 1977, and the description still fits. The funny thing is, the car that initially was to have replaced the 124 Abarth Sport as Fiat's rally weapon of choice in the latter half of the 1970s was the X1/9. Developed by Abarth, by then a fully-fledged subsidiary of Fiat, the prototipo competition variant made its debut on the Giro di Sicilia in March 1974, only to retire with transmission failure. Nevertheless, it showed



Orange stripe adds colour to an otherwise plain interior

well elsewhere. Subcontractor Bertone was then tasked with gearing-up for the production of road cars in order to appease homologation requirements, and all that was left was for Fiat's management to rubber-stamp the scheme.

Instead, it axed it. The suits in Turin reasoned that its newest WRC weapon should be based on a saloon car. The net result of this was the resignation of competitions manager, Gino Macaluso, and instructions to start again. Strictly speaking, however, Abarth had already built a 131-based machine, the experimental SE031, which boasted steroidal bodywork and a 3.5-litre V6 engine. The new rally 131 would not be so powered for a variety of reasons, not least Fiat management's insistence that the Abarth-ised version be broadly identifiable with the massproduced 131. That meant a four-banger, the chosen unit being a long-stroke, dry-sump, fuelinjected twin-cam unit with a cast-iron block and an aluminium 16-valve head.

Several suspension designs were trialled, including a beam rear axle and a de Dion set-up. What finally emerged from this Darwinian approach was an independent MacPherson strut arrangement, the front end being akin to the regular 131, albeit suitably beefed up. Physically, the bodyshell might have looked much like the mainstream production model with a few aerodynamic aids, but only the inner structure was carried over. The front panel, front and rear wings, bonnet and bootlid were fashioned from glassfibre, while the doors were skinned in aluminium. A rollcage and a latticework of tubular steel linking the front struts afforded additional rigidity. In prototype form, the 131 Abarth won first time out on the Rally delle Valli Piacentine in December 1975, with Fulvio Bacchelli at the helm alongside Bruno Scabini.

With homologation paperwork in place by April '76, the definitive Group 4 131 Abarth was blooded on the Elba Rally in Italy. Markku Alén claimed the honours. Maurizio Verini then emerged victorious on the ECR Tulip Rally and the Rally di San Giacomo. Later that year, Alén won the 1000 Lakes (he would do so again for Fiat in 1979 and '80), this successful partial season flowering into a sustained attack on the WRC for 1977, at the end of which the factory Fiat and Lancia teams merged.



The works 131s contested every round bar the Safari, with Alén being joined by fellow Finns Timo Mäkinen, Simo Lampinen, Timo Salonen, plus Tarmac specialists Jean-Claude Andruet and Bernard Darniche, Bacchelli and Walter Röhrl. The net result was victory in five of the 10 rounds contested by the team, plus Manufacturers' title honours ahead of Ford by a scant four points. In 1978 it was same story, with the factory squad racking up five WRC wins and a second Manufacturers' gong.

In 1979, the first year of the World Drivers' Championship, Fiat chose to reduce its works bid in favour of assisting independent teams, often in the European Rally Championship (six drivers won as many rounds). Not only that, but Seat also homologated its own badgeengineered variant. In 1980, the works Fiat squad returned to prominence and sealed a third Manufacturers' title, while Röhrl claimed the first of his two Drivers' crowns. Heading into 1981, the factory *equipe* contested only five rounds, with Alén victorious in Portugal. The plug was pulled at the end of the year, the model having accrued 18 wins in six seasons.

As for the roadgoing variant, it wasn't as far removed from its competition-rooted sibling as you might imagine. For starters, cars came equipped with non-synchro gearboxes, although dealers could supply full-synchro units if you asked. As for how many cars were made, that rather depends on whose estimates you credit. Homologation requirements dictated 400 cars,



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and nobody can agree on how many of those were sold in *stradale* (road) trim. Some insist that as many as 608 were made of all kinds. Whatever the truth, it's a rare beast.

A 131 Abarth cost £8500 in basic form (that's around £52,000 in today's money). The Lampredi twin-cam unit produced as much as 240bhp in competition specification, but a 'mere' 140bhp at 6400rpm in road trim. And that was with only a single Weber 34ADF carburettor. *Autocar* figured a car in period: John Miles recorded a 0-60mph time of 7.2 secs, and a top speed of 112mph against the factory's claim of 118mph. The magazine went on to praise its mid-range performance after covering 40-60mph in third gear in just 3.3 secs.

Which brings us to today, and a hot autumnal day in Lisbon. 'Our' 1977 example appears striking in its oh-so-period hue of Rosso Arancio. Bertone appeared to have conceived the makeover with the aid of a blunt pencil and a set square, the spoiler in place with downthrust in mind rather than lowering the drag coefficient. The once-proud styling house was also responsible for the initial assembly of each car, before they were dispatched to the main 131 facility in Rivalta for completion. The boxed arches, there to cover the 195/50 x 15in Pirelli

rubber, and that deep snowplough-cum-front spoiler and quartet of Cibié headlights lend it a confrontational attitude, even if the scoops sited on the bonnet and just ahead of the rear wheelarches are blanked off.

The cabin, meanwhile, is largely carried over from the standard 131 Mirafiori, right down to the clock (weirdly, there's no oil-pressure gauge). It's a symphony of plastic and nylon – and

FIAT-ABARTH 131 STRADALE

Sold/number built 1976/c400

Construction steel monocoque, glassfibre and alloy panels **Engine** all-alloy, dohc 1995cc 'four', Weber 34ADF carburettor; 140bhp @ 6400rpm; 133lb ft @ 3800rpm

Transmission five-speed manual, RWD **Suspension** independent, by MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar f/r

Steering rack and pinion Brakes discs Length 13ft 8in (4190mm) Width 5ft 8in (1720mm) Height 4ft 5½in (1360mm)

Wheelbase 8ft 2in (2490mm) Weight 2161lb (980kg)

0-60mph 7.2 secs

Top speed 112mph Mpg 25

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WHEN ABARTH LEANED ON LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The Chequered Flag famously made the Lancia Stratos a winner in British rallying. Rather less well known is the London team's contribution to honing the 131. Boss Graham Warner recalled in 2013: "Fiat asked us to run the 131 on selected British rallies in 1977. To my mind, we were recruited to act as an unofficial development team in the run-up to that year's RAC Rally. We went through the whole car and made recommendations, which ran to several pages, many of which were implemented. Not that we ever received any credit, you understand..."

Team regular Billy Coleman spent five days at the Abarth competition department in Turin prior to the event, but was unable to test the car on gravel. Nevertheless, he put in some competitive times early on in that year's Welsh Rally, despite the loss of fifth gear. Coleman

and David Richards would make amends a month later on the International Scottish Rally, claiming fourth place out of 159 entrants despite nagging problems. "Pirelli was on hand to offer assistance, with various combinations of tyre compounds being tested," Warner added. "The issue wasn't with the rubber, it was the wheels: they kept breaking! Afterwards we switched from Campagnolos to stronger Minilites, which alleviated the problem."

Having beaten Ford to the WRC title, Fiat descended on the RAC Rally armed with six 131s, with the Flag colours flying on those entered for Timo Mäkinen, Timo Salonen and Simo Lampinen. Warner said: "We demanded that since we had done a lot of work on the car, we should have our name on them." Lampinen guided the first Fiat home in seventh place.

inelegant with it. That said, the two-spoke steering wheel, with its exposed screwheads and Abarth scorpion logo in the centre boss, offers a welcome racer reference point. The same is true of the drilled pedals, but little else suggests 'motorsport'. Then there are the bucket seats, which look fab with their orange go-faster stripes. They are not particularly comfortable, though. Miles wrote in *Autocar*: 'The seats look inviting – so inviting – but they are among the most wretched I have ever come across.'

Battery issues aside, the 131 is fun to drive. Or at least it is once you're free of cityscapes and stop-start traffic. The Fiat has rather a lumpy idle and accordingly is a little truculent at low revs, moving in jerks and judders until it hooks up. Given free rein and enough space, though, it accelerates cleanly and it is suitably vocal. It isn't particularly tuneful, mind, until it's approaching 6000prm. Then it sounds joyous, all pop and fizz and bluster. By modern standards, however, it doesn't feel particularly fast, but there is joy to be reaped from keeping the throttle buried. That said, you do need to carefully time your gearshifts, if only between second and third. Don't be tempted to ram home the changes because it won't thank you for it.

The anti-roll bars at each end are clearly at

'With another 100bhp it would be a different story. Nevertheless, the 131 remains a challenge to drive smoothly'

their loosest here, and the Fiat leans heavily through corners – but this doesn't seem to upset grip levels. With the optional ZF limited-slip diff in place, it requires a degree of provocation to get the back out on smooth asphalt, but on the loose it's a different story. The heft of the steering is surprising, quick-witted and accurate, but wind on the lock and it responds by piling on the weight. The three-and-a-half turns from lock to lock mean you twirl the wheel more than expected, but it's part of what you might euphemistically call an immersive experience. The middle pedal needs a good prod, but the discs set-up works well, if a bit all or nothing.

This isn't quite the wild child preconceptions might have you believe. With another 100bhp it would be a different story. Nevertheless, the 131 remains a challenge to drive smoothly; demanding but rewarding. You get back what you put in, the briefest of sorties tells you that.

The sad part is that Fiat never followed through. Once the 131's frontline career ended, Fiat's focus in rallying returned to Lancia. There have been sporadic comebacks for Fiat in recent years, but nothing particularly serious; no headline-grabbing homologation specials, no sexy halo cars. In period, the Fiat-Abarth 131 Rally made children of all ages go weak at the knees. And, to be honest, nothing has changed in the meantime.

Thanks to Piero Dalmaso; Luis Cunha of ACP Clássicos: Adelino Dinis and Paul Baker

ONCE UPON A TIME INTERNATIONAL THE WILLIAM ON THE W

A stunning new book brings to life the story of the motorsport explosion in California in the early '50s

WORDS MICK WALSH PHOTOGRAPHY CORSARESEARCH ARCHIVES

odachrome. They give us those nice bright colours. They give us the greens of summers. Makes you think all the world's a sunny day, oh yeah.'

Paul Simon's '73 single brilliantly celebrated the vivid, lasting quality of Eastman colour-reversal film. While Europe remained in monochrome after WW2, US photographers had easy access to Kodachrome, as the remarkable *Weekend Heroes 2.0* confirms. For its second edition, Tony Adriaensens' book has grown to three volumes, 1500-plus pages

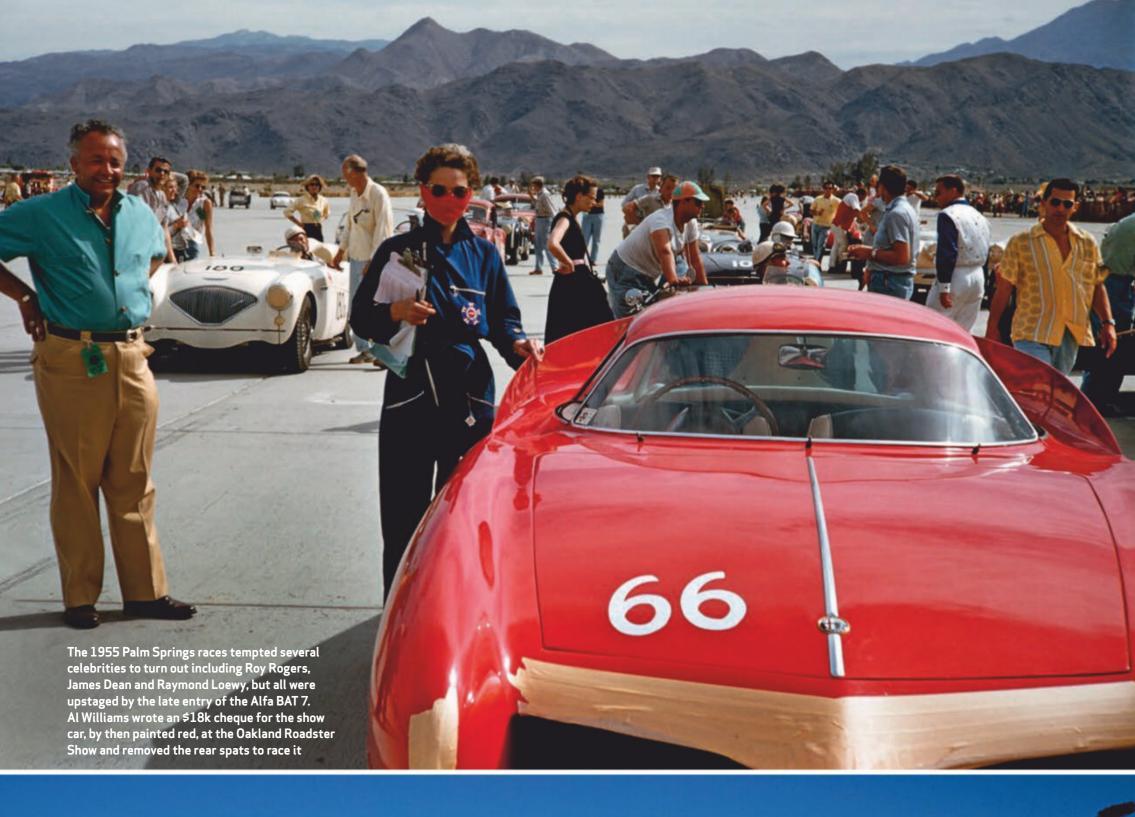
and more than 900 pictures. The glorious imagery is mostly on Kodachrome and looks as fresh as the day it was shot. Celebrating a golden amateur era, the photos take you back to an age when sporty imports diced with local specials around dusty airfield courses, and only straw bales and wicker fences protected the crowds.

From the Palm Springs Road Race in April '50 to the last contest at the dangerous Paramount Ranch course in late '57, Weekend Heroes 2.0 presents a lively record of motorsport's fruition on the West Coast. Amazingly, it took a Belgian to seek out veteran locals and motivate them to dig up old film from their lofts. "When I started













Just before the Carrell Speedway races in February 1951, a young Phil Hill sold his XK120 and bought the ex-Mille Miglia Alfa Romeo 8C-2900 Spider from the Tommy Lee estate. The future World Champion drifted around the loose-surface dirt track to win on his debut in the Trophy Dash, but was beaten in the main event by Don Parkinson's Jaguar special



It's 21 January 1951, and the weary entrants on the first Press-on-Regardless Rally gather in the car park at Bob's Big Boy drive-in. European imports dominated the entry, including Al Moss' immaculate Allard J2 and a rare Simca 8 Sport. "We covered 420 arduous miles through snow and ice up to 6000ft," said Oliver Billingsley, who entered his Morris Minor



The dramatic start of the headline event at the first Sports Car Club of America Bakersfield Races in 1954, with Bill David's brand-new Maserati A6GCS leading Bill Pickford's Jaguar Special, while eventual winner Ken Miles gives chase from towards the back in his demon-quick MG R1 special (car number 50)

reasearching my Siata book, the fierce rivalry between the 'tea baggers' and the California hot rodders fascinated me," says Adriaensens. "Discovering old Kodachrome really brought it to life. Maybe it was the California sun, but there was something magical about these images.

"When I visited Los Angeles I was introduced to Joe Smith, who lent me yellow boxes packed with fantastic slides. Joe had worked in the movie business and attended many early meetings. The pictures were stunning and this find kick-started the first edition of *Weekend Heroes* in 2007."

Word of the project opened the doors to other amateur collections including Al Long and the much-missed Bob Lytle, and Adriaensens was lucky to have started when many key players were still alive and able to offer anecdotes. "We raced on road circuits that today's drivers would shudder at," recalled Roger Barlow, who ran International Motors in LA. "The earliest events were just time trials and hillclimbs. We only dreamed about actually running a real race."

That historic day finally happened at Palm Springs in 1950, when the first genuine sports

car road race was staged with a dozen assorted cars including Barlow's new XK120, the first in southern California. The scene quickly took off, with more events and new tracks, most now the playgrounds of racing ghosts. The likes of Phil Hill, Carroll Shelby and Richie Ginther made their names, but Adriaensens has a special interest in Ken Miles, the talented Brummie who started a new life in America in 1951: "From building the fastest MGs to setting up a race school and being Cal Club president, there was nothing he couldn't do. After the book went to press I saw *Le Mans* '66 and was quite emotional about his story making the big screen."

The book is a remarkable achievement, with Adriaensens having done everything from writing to scanning and layout, and the limited run is likely to be another deserved sell-out. These wonderful images offer a rich flashback to a special era, with no rollbars or sponsorship other than the cool Mobil Pegasus.

Weekend Heroes 2.0, The Story before Ford vs Ferrari is priced at €449; see corsaresearch.com





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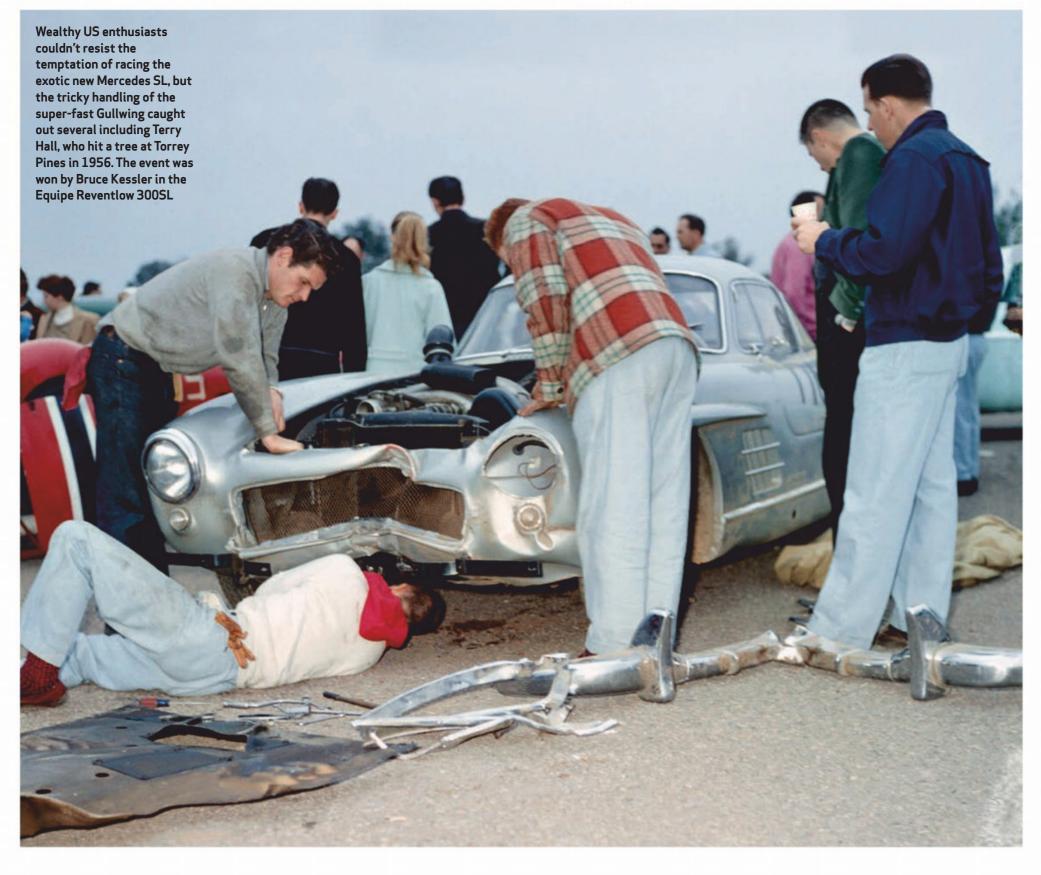




American MG racers soon started developing the popular British import, which resulted in some very rapid specials. Among the finest and fastest was John Edgar's flame-red supercharged MG TC Special '88'. Later fitted with a streamlined body by Emil Diedt, it was raced successfully by Jack McAfee, seen here at the Palm Springs start in 1952



Two new Jaguar C-types caused quite a stir at the first Madera Races in November 1952. For their West Coast debut the silver car (XKC-010) was driven by Sherwood Johnson, while a young Phil Hill took the wheel for Charles Hornburg, the owner of XKC-007, and finished second to Bill Pollack's Allard after spinning on oil deposited on the track





NEWORDER GRAND The large XI-S and latus Elite are an unlikely

The Jaguar XJ-S and Lotus Elite are an unlikely duo, but these British GTs have plenty in common



hey look an odd couple, yet there is more to link the early Jaguar XJ-S and M50
Lotus Elite than there is to divide them. Both were four-place grand touring cars for the 1970s, born into a beleaguered Britain looking for reasons to feel good about itself again, confronting the gloomy automotive problems and predictions of the decade head-on with rational solutions.

Both came strictly in closed form for a more safety-conscious world that seemed to be turning its back on pure sports cars. In favour instead was a more versatile breed of vehicle that might have to work for its living as a business and family tool, rather than being purely recreational in the way their E-type and Elan predecessors had been. In replacing those national treasures of the '60s, the visually controversial XJ-S and Elite probably faced their harshest critics from the more traditional Jaguar and Lotus owners.

Yet both cars sought to attract a new type of buyer. One that was willing to pay a steeper price for a more luxurious and highly specified close-coupled four-seater, cast in the mould of the GT competition from Europe, where luxury held equal sway with urge.

It is doubtful there were many self-righteous ecologists among the ranks of potential Elite owners, but, in building a performance car that was parsimonious with (increasingly expensive) fuel, Colin Chapman judged the mood of the post-petrol-crisis market perfectly with his 25mpg, 126mph grand tourer.

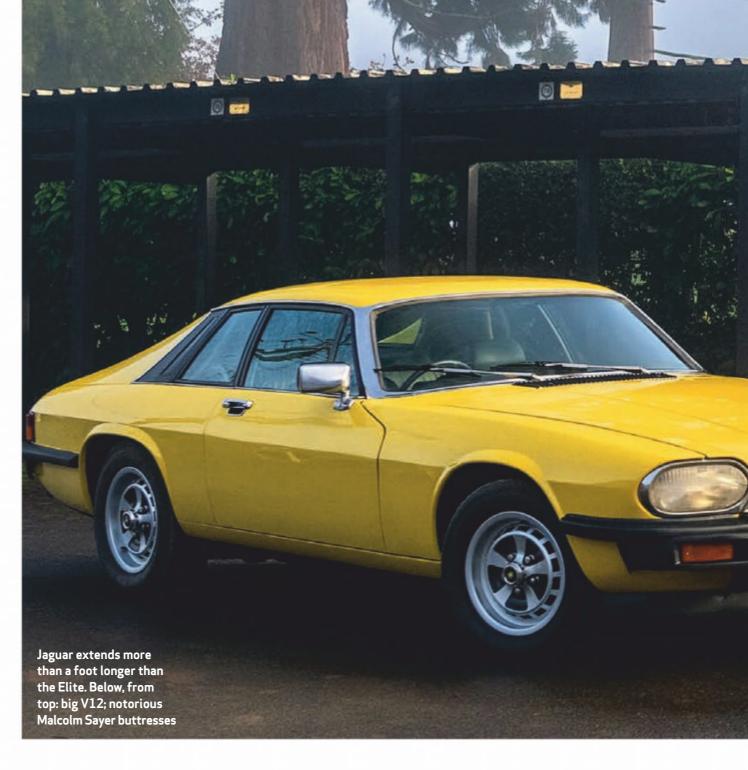
Not so the Jaguar; but then Browns Lane was never likely to build a thrifty GT. The XJ-S at least seemed to recognise a change in fashion and mood: the need to produce a flagship supercoupé with a new flavour for a post-E-type world. Its Frankfurt launch, rather than Earls Court, emphasised its international appeal and it was supported by a bullish blanket advertising campaign featuring that famous gauntlet-throwing headline: 'September 10, 1975. A black day for Modena, Stuttgart and Turin.'

Make no mistake, the XJ-S was a big deal in 1975. There were as many people who disliked its looks as loved them, and some dismissed the car unfairly as a 153mph/14mpg dinosaur in a world of rising fuel costs and speed restrictions. This was an 'exotic' Jaguar for the '70s. Based on a stiffer, shortened XJ floorpan, and with the same superbly resolved suspension, its enormously strong long-nose/short-deck body visually owed nothing to any existing Browns Lane product.

The most widely discussed element of its styling were those infamous flying buttress rear quarters, implemented by Malcolm Sayer in the name of air spillage rather than fashion. Lozenge-shaped Cibié headlamps and sturdy black impact bumpers gave the XJ-S a unique presence, yet one that was still identifiably 'Jaguar' in its stance and proportions.

Not very Jaguar-like was the price: at £9000 the XJ-S cost as much or more than many of its conspicuously expensive Continental rivals. But why underplay the sticker price on this first post-Lyons Jaguar when it was so obviously superior to its rivals in so many ways? Or, as one American road tester accurately put it, so 'fantastically over qualified for today's driving conditions'.

In a market made up of very good, mostly German straight-sixes and V8s, nobody really









Rare manual four-speed 'box is much-prized in XJ-S circles

needed a 5.3-litre, single-cam-per-bank, Lucas fuel-injected V12; yet Jaguar gave it to them anyway, producing a wide, low-slung GT that was an almost surreal combination of Ferrari and Lamborghini-type performance with limousine silence and refinement. On paper at least, the XJ-S made those Italian V12s look rather superfluous, and its BMW and Mercedes rivals were comfortably outranked, particularly when the likes of the 450SLC were easily as thirsty in return for quite a lot less pace and finesse.

On home turf, leaving aside handbuilts from Aston Martin and Jensen, the Lotus Elite was in some ways the XJ-S's most credible British rival. At £6700 in the spring of 1974, the all-new Type 75 Elite was the world's most expensive four-cylinder car and the upmarket move Colin Chapman had been looking to make for years.

There was no shortage of ambition here. It might have been down on the Jaguar by 130bhp, eight pistons and more than three litres, but it was not long before the Elite's price-tag had almost caught up with that of the XJ-S. It seemed every inch a car for its time, a low-drag full four-seater in the modern 'wedge' idiom that was hundreds of pounds lighter than its rival. And, thanks to its low frontal area and relatively high gearing, it required just 41 of its 155bhp to maintain a steady 100mph.

The Elite was powered by the twin-cam, canted-over Type 907 1973cc engine first seen in the Jensen-Healey. It was a well-massaged blend of established Chapman principles – glassfibre body and backbone chassis – but with important new details such as a highly impact-resistant structure that effortlessly outperformed all the Federal and European crash safety requirements.



The body was formed in two halves along its waistline in a 'secret' new process developed for Chapman's Moonraker boats.

The rear suspension was a classic example of Chapman's ethos of making one component do two jobs: the driveshaft doubled as the upper link, Jaguar-style. In service it suffered leaky differential output seals and hub-carrier failure, perhaps the greatest cause of owners' frustration.

Where the XJ-S came in just one level of trim with few options, the Elite, with its ItalDesign fascia and hatchback, was a three-car range at first: denominations 501/502/503 indicated power steering, air-conditioning or a combination of all three respectively. And from 1976 there was even an automatic Elite 504.

Some cars grow into their looks. For all its charms, the edgy, angular profile of the Elite seemed to fall out of favour quite quickly and by 1982 (with 2500 built) it had been killed off in

JAGUAR XJ-S (PRE-HE)

Sold/number built 1975-'80/14,800
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-alloy, sohc-per-bank 5344cc V12
wth Lucas fuel injection
Max power 285bhp @ 5800rpm
Max torque 294lb ft @ 4500rpm

Max torque 294lb ft @ 4500rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, RWD

Suspension independent, at front by semitrailing wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers rear lower wishbones with driveshafts as upper links, radius arms, twin coilovers per side; anti-roll bar f/r

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion

Brakes discs, with servo Length 16ft
(4872mm) Width 5ft 11in (1791mm)

Height 4ft 2in (1265mm) Wheelbase 8ft 6in (2591mm) Weight 3763lb (1707kg)

0-60mph 6.9 secs Top speed 153mph Mpg 13

Price new £14,472 Price now £5-18,000

favour of the Excel, which was in effect a much improved version of the Éclat with the same booted fastback shape that was less characterful but perhaps more widely acceptable.

Yet it is the dramatic 'mini Espada' feel of Oliver Winterbottom's Elite that has best stood the test of time; ditto the original 1975-'81 rendition of the XJ-S, to my eyes at least.

John Egan's better-built, thriftier 1981 XJ-S High Efficiency saved the model from extinction, but it lacks the '70s 'supercar' feel of the original. With its bold primary external colours (they all seemed to be red, white or yellow, somehow), classic GKN alloys and minimalist interior, the early XJ-S made profileraising appearances in television shows *Return of the Saint* and *The New Avengers* that are very much part of its appeal.

The most collectable of the early cars is, of course, the 352-run special-order manual version,

only avaliable on the pre-HE cars. They were built not only to keep a die-hard 'sports car' element of buyers happy, but also as an acknowledgement that the early Borg-Warner Model 12 automatics were not really a match for the V12's 285bhp. It was no accident that most of the early road tests are of manual cars, rather than the B-W automatics.

With the GM400 fitted, the self-shifting XJ-S became a much nicer car and, when you drive one, it's easy to see why the manual was so rare. I can speak from experience, because BEG 42T (made in 1978, in Cotswold Yellow with superrare steel sunroof) is my old car – and I never liked driving it quite as much as the not-very-rare automatic XJ-S I had at the same time.

Then again, it's a much better car now since its bare-metal restoration by XJ specialist Keith Partington on behalf of its current owner, Adrian Massey, who also owns the famous pre-production XJ 2.8, MWK 28G. Mindful that if you are going to restore an XJ-S it makes sense to rebuild the sought-after four-speed, Massey used BEG on a daily basis until the engine fatally coughed.

"I decided on a full rebuild when the cooling system went and blew the head gaskets," he says. "When Keith took it apart there was hardly a component in the cooling system that worked."

You feel cocooned inside its low, leather-swaddled cabin, with those revolving minor instruments and a blank in the warning light cluster that should have housed an indicator for a proposed two-speed rear axle. The seats are skinny and Modernist, not the usual Jaguar semi-armchair type, but it's hard to see why the driving position was so widely criticised.

The low whine of the starter flows into the hum of the tickover in a way that is unique to this engine and you almost need to look at the rev counter to know the car is running. You are soon urged forward by an engine that makes none of the usual V12 cacophony but is simply a vague, aspirating mechanical presence that wafts the car forward in a series of smooth lunges.

Unless you feel the need to use 6000rpm, the low gears of the slightly ponderous transmission generally make more noise than the engine, and the XJ-S flows down the road with a creamy potency that makes the rate of progress deceptively undramatic. The weight of the clutch you soon forget and gearchanging is largely optional, with a delicious flow of top-gear torque combined with delightfully smooth and accurate throttle control.

Not so the Lotus Elite, although in this later post-1980, Type 912 2.2-litre form (front spoiler, bigger rear lamps and square numberplate chief among the visual tell-tales) it is much more flexible than you might imagine. It's well capable of taking full throttle from 20mph in fourth gear on its flatter and fatter torque curve.

Not that you'd want to treat it like that too often, because the Getrag five-speed 'box is pleasant to handle. It is more positive than the old Austin Maxi-derived unit in the 2-litre model while giving 60mph in second gear and 83mph in third, should you wish to avail yourself of the full 7000rpm.

Even lower slung than the XJ-S, the Elite has similar rear vision issues caused by the massive C-pillars but makes better use of its space, with adult-sized, deeply cushioned back seats. Its rear occupants sit knees-up, but the Jaguar's is more a perch that is really only good for teenagers.

A rare full-leather cabin lifts the tone of this Elite's interior considerably and, being one of the more exclusive Riviera versions, there is a lift-out roof panel above the front seats. A glass divider between the rear seat and the rather short boot helps to banish fuel and exhaust fumes.

Elite owner Angus Watson, a retired engineer who now lives in Stroud, became interested in Lotus and his hero Jim Clark from the age of six and is still passionate today.

"I grew up in Tyneside," Watson says, "and I remember getting beaten up at school when Graham Hill won Sports Personality of the Year rather than a footballer because I was the only one who knew who he was... I was forever getting into trouble drawing Europas on my









school books and was fascinated by Chapman's theory of elegant simplicity – the aerodynamics, the plastic technologies."

Watson finally bought an S2 Europa, followed by an Elan +2 and an Elan fixed-head. "I've always used original Lotus parts and found the cars to be reliable," he adds.

With a family under way he bought his Ice Blue ex-Mike Kimberley 1982 Motor Show Elite Riviera in 1984 and put 30,000 miles on it in the first year as his everyday car, with factory services every 6000 miles. "I paid £11,000 when I could have had a Maserati Bora for the same money," he recalls. "That would be a £200k car now, this is worth about £20,000 and is one of the best."

The Elite, freshly revived by well-known specialist Paul Matty in Worcestershire, cruises quite peacefully in top but sounds throaty and aggressive when extended in the indirect gears, with a rate of pick-up that is not massively adrift of the Jaguar until you get beyond 70mph.

LOTUS ELITE

Sold/number built 1974-'82/2398

Construction galvanised steel backbone chassis with glassfibre body Engine all-alloy, dohc 2174cc 16-valve slantfour, twin Dell'Orto 45DHLA carburettors Max power 160bhp @ 6500rpm Max torque 160lb ft @ 5000rpm Transmission five-speed manual (optional three-speed automatic), RWD **Suspension** independent, at **front** by wishbones, anti-roll bar rear trailing arms, lower links; coilover dampers f/r **Steering** power-assisted rack and pinion **Brakes** discs front, drums rear, with servo **Length** 14ft 11in (4458mm) **Width** 5ft 11in (1816mm) **Height** 3ft 11in (1207mm) Wheelbase 8ft 1in (2483mm) Weight 2429lb (1102kg) **0-60mph** 7.5 secs Top speed 132mph Mpg 36.2 Price new £16,433 Price now £3-10,000



Where the XJ-S hums like a turbine, the Elite makes healthy, deep-lunged and lusty four-cylinder-type sounds that are the polar opposite of the Jaguar's suave refinement and effortless muscle. But while it loses out in absolute straight-line urge, on a piece of road where nature rather than civil engineering dictates the terrain the Elite is probably the quicker car. Utterly composed, poised and stable, it goes where it is bidden absolutely faithfully with a minimum of body roll, understeer and drama. Swift progress is not only natural but almost relaxing because the Lotus' driving position is so good, the ride so comfortable and free from flab, and the responses so predictable.

By tweaking the XJ's suspension and steering to favour a subtly firmer set-up, Jaguar made the XJ-S feel like a smaller, handier car than its saloon brethen. Initial impressions are that the accurate steering is about the right weight but not over-burdened with feel, yet somehow that's part of the velvety, insulated character of the car. The ride is as soft, quiet and controlled at 10mph as it is at 110mph, and there is an eerie lack of

wind noise around its ugly, cheap-looking painted-metal door window frames.

The Jaguar is not as chuckable as the Lotus, and is much heavier and larger, but it's a supremely balanced and confidence-inspiring vehicle. It won't do anything ungentlemanly if you back off in the wrong place or leave your braking too late, but the XJ-S is not a car you naturally drive near its limits. Nor do you deny it the respect it deserves in the wet, because both break the magical spell of its composure and refinement.

I like the Lotus and Jaguar very much, but possibly more as ideas than for the troubled reality of actually owning either of them.

As they enter their fifth decade, however, maybe we can allow ourselves the indulgence of celebrating the concepts rather than lingering on the shortcomings. We Brits seem to be forgiving of foreign exotica, yet ready to stick the boot in to anything made here in the '70s.

Certainly there are parallels that can be drawn in the quality problems that made both cars frustrating to own, particularly in the case of the Lotus with its rust-prone chassis and

inherently flawed rear suspension design.

On balance I would probably take the Jaguar. Flagship of the British Leyland range, the XJ-S was more a straightforward case of build-quality issues. It was a marvellous ananchronism, one of the planet's great luxury cars built by Marxists in donkey jackets, that stuck two fingers up at a world that had written off the strike-torn UK; a car so much better than it needed to be that it was still in production 20 years later.

If the XJ-S was too much of a good thing the Elite was never quite enough, inviting the attentions of Rover V8 engine-swappers who missed the point of what Colin Chapman was trying to do with this light, safe, luxurious and efficient four-cylinder, 130mph four-seater. This was a project that, I suspect, tested his ingenuity as much as anything he ever put on four wheels for road use. That alone might be a reason for seeking out a good one, although they are few and far between.

Thanks to Shelsley Walsh (www.shelsleywalsh.com); Paul Matty Sportscars (paulmattysportscars.co.uk)

ithin the suburbs of Tours lies a plainlooking building that's well known to lovers of automotive history. Behind its anonymous façade you'll find 3ADT, Dominique Tessier's specialist workshop – and at the time of our visit a 1953 Delahaye 135 MS CL Spéciale is concealed within. A few months earlier, a telephone call and a selection of emailed photographs had piqued our curiosity about this one-off Delahaye that, while it never really disappeared, had never had its remarkable story told – until now.

For that we must thank the diligence of historian Wilfrid Leroy-Prost, who trawled through the archives to gain a fuller

be adapted with equal ease to cabriolets or coupés, and Faget-Varnet produced a number of bespoke bodies for Delahaye - estimates suggest six 135 cabriolets between 1948 and 1951, five 135 coupés between 1948 and 1953,

plus a solitary 235 coupé in 1951.

A symbol of French luxury car manufacture, Delahaye had enjoyed a golden period during the '30s thanks to a technical revolution in its chassis development and the adoption of independent front suspension on the 134 and 138 Super Luxe models. Delahaye's chassis were clothed by some of most celebrated coachbuilders of the age, from Letourneur et Marchand to Chapron via Franay, Saoutchik, de Villars and Figoni et Falaschi.

The uncontested star of the 1936 Paris Salon was the company's short-wheelbase (2700mm)

THE FORGOTTEN

This unique coachbuilt prototype is the missing link between French institutions Delahaye and Facel Vega

WORDS CHRISTOPHE GAILLARD PHOTOGRAPHY THIERRY GERMAIN

understanding of a car whose history owes much to three automotive icons that made their mark on the industry during the 20th century: Delahaye, Facel Vega and Faget-Varnet.

The least well known of the trio, Faget-Varnet, was one of the many coachbuilders that were once scattered across France and grew out of a collaboration between Jean Faget and Henri Varnet. Based in Levallois, close to Paris, the firm produced bodies for military and industrial vehicles, as well as coaches, and worked as a subcontractor for Citroën, Panhard, Willème and Bernard. Faget-Varnet's secret weapon was the invention, in around 1948, of an all-metal frame made from 1010 sheet steel. This spark of creativity enabled it to move on from using wooden structures, which helped accelerate productivity and thus saved a considerable amount of money. By transferring its military industrial processes to road cars, Faget-Varnet provided a glimpse into the future world of monocogue bodies. The box-type frame could

Figoni et Falaschi roadster, inspired by one of the famous illustrator Géo Ham's drawings. It combined exquisite styling with a stratospheric price-tag and was purchased by the Aga Khan.

By the time of the Faget-Varnet project, however, Delahaye was approaching the end of the road in the slipstream of numerous flops, including the Type 175 introduced at the 1947 Paris Salon, the technically outclassed Type 135 and the marque's swansong, the Type 235 that appeared just before Delahaye was taken over by Hotchkiss on 29 July 1954.

It was with one eye on the 1953 Paris show that Faget-Varnet commenced construction of the prototype that sits before us today. As a basis it took a complete 1949 Delahaye 135 MS chassis (801029) and engine assembly, mated to a Cotal MK35 electromagnetic transmission. For the coachwork, Faget-Varnet contacted Facel in order to obtain a stock of body panels that had been used to produce the Ford Comète – and that's where Facel Vega enters the script.







In the early '50s, Facel Vega did not yet exist. Facel (Forges et Ateliers de Construction d'Eure-et-Loir) was founded in 1939 by Jean Daninos, who two years earlier had also launched another business, Métallon.

A specialist in the field of light alloys and stainless steel, Daninos produced parts for the American aviation industry during the Second World War. In 1945 he merged Facel and Métallon, the new enterprise working across the automobile and aerospace industries and undertaking contract work for Simca, Delahaye and, particularly, Ford when the latter's French arm introduced the Comète in 1951. The design of this 2+2 V8 coupé was completed halfway through 1950 by Daninos, Farina and Brasseur. The roof's flowing shape was identical to that of the unique Bentley Cresta II, which Daninos was in the process of creating to use as his personal transport. With this distinctive roof, wide 'chipcutter' grille, integrated two-tier headlights and sculpted bonnet incorporating an air intake, the range-topping Comète Monte-Carlo provided a taste of things to come when the Facel Vega was launched during the summer of '54.

Faget-Varnet took the elements Facel had used on the Comète, modified them during construction of the 135 MS CL Spéciale prototype and added a few of its own stylistic



Spare 17in wire wheel is mounted in a hinged carrier that folds back to provide access the luggage bay and neatly finished fuel-filler door

flourishes, the most obvious being the chrome headlight surrounds that were to become something of a Facel Vega signature. The upper section of the front wings was broadened slightly just below the windscreen pillars, and the wheelarches were also made a touch wider.

It was a style redolent of Zagato's sporting designs, and foretold some of the refinements of the Facel... a full seven years before it was launched. The bonnet was redesigned, with two vents positioned ahead of the windscreen to accelerate the flow of hot air from the engine bay. The door profiles were also carefully shaped and contoured, in a marked contrast to the straighter, more slab-sided look of the Comète. The rear wings reprised the flared arches from the front, a detail highlighted by a chrome strip that ran the full length of the car's flanks (although it is barely perceptible between the wheels). The roof was lighter than the threepiece original, helped by the fully panoramic rear screen. Last but by no means least, a significant percentage of the everyday hardware – headlights, tail-lights, bumpers, wheel trims and grille – were substantially reworked.

In the cabin, the trim and dashboard were specific to this car, although the Quillery steering wheel was the same as that found on the 235 prototype of 1951. The last discernible



The 235 – and Delahaye – soon met its fate, but that was far from the end of the story for this prototype. It proved to be a foretaste of the Facel Vega HK500 introduced in 1958. Indeed, the structure of the underbody, doors, boot and bonnet (all the way to its hinges) of this car are all but identical to the production Facel. The same applies to the shape of the roof, along with the design of the engine bay and firewall.

For some unknown reason, however – and none of those involved with the original project are still alive – the Delahaye 135M CL Spéciale prototype would never make its scheduled appearance at the 1953 Paris Salon. Instead, it remained in the hands of Jean Faget, as a final testament to the artistry of the Levallois coachbuilder that closed its doors in 1954,

decades after its creation, and on 31 July it was given the registration 6197 RQ 27: for the first time, it could now legally be used on the road.

Nevertheless, it had covered fewer than 10,000km when present owner Anthony Collé bought the Spéciale at auction in November 2017. "It was completely by chance that I came across the car," he says. "I saw a newspaper ad and was seduced by the Delahaye's very mysterious background story." But with its genuine historical significance, this machine deserved more than to just sit in a garage; the decision was made to commission a comprehensive restoration so the Delahaye could be exhibited at shows and concours d'élégance. The job was entrusted to Tessier in April 2018 and it took his craftsmen, engine

'The Spéciale was a foretaste of the Facel Vega HK500: the structures of the underbody, doors, boot and bonnet are all but identical'

difference was the incorporation of a so-called 'invisible' sunroof, a design for which the Levallois firm had sought a patent.

true to the original design

The overall result is a car that bears only a slight familial resemblance to the Comète. Echoes of the 235 were not limited to the Quillery wheel, because other common elements included the steering box – analysis of the underpinnings suggests very clearly that this bodywork had been prepared for mounting on a 235 chassis. That theory is strengthened by the presence of Delage hydraulic brakes, something too modern to have been seen on any 135.

shortly before Delahaye did the same. Comète production ended at about the same time and Facel Vega would in turn fold a decade later, the end of the line for the three companies that had played a role in the creation of this prototype.

Some years later, Faget donated the car to industrial designer Philippe Charbonneaux – and handed over a second body, fully built but without a chassis. Charbonneaux placed the former in his car museum at Villiers-en-Lieu, in north-eastern France, alongside the Delahaye 235 prototype with which he'd been involved. It wasn't until 1981 that the CL Spéciale changed hands again after being bought by Club Delahaye member Georges Claverie, who became the first person to actually drive it!

After a number of adjustments and alterations, the prototype was presented to the road traffic authorities later that same year, almost three builders and trimmers 2000 hours to return the car to the condition in which we see it today.

It's a privilege to climb aboard the Faget-Varnet Delahaye on its first post-restoration road trip. A degree of suppleness is required to squeeze into this 2+2, but the ambience is sublime - helped in no small part by the two-tone leather trim. The 3.6-litre overheadvalve straight-six purrs, the Cotal transmission picks out ratios seamlessly, and only the Delage hydraulic brakes still require a bit of fine-tuning. After a short run, it's back to Tessier and his team for some final fettling before the car heads off for its first major event – and not just any event, either. "I couldn't believe it," says Collé. "Being invited to Pebble Beach seemed unreal to me." A nice surprise, for sure, but also deserved recognition for a fabulous restoration.

Thanks to Wilfrid Leroy-Prost, Anthony Collé and Atelier Automobiles Anciennes Dominique Tessier (www.3adt.com). Translation by Simon Arron



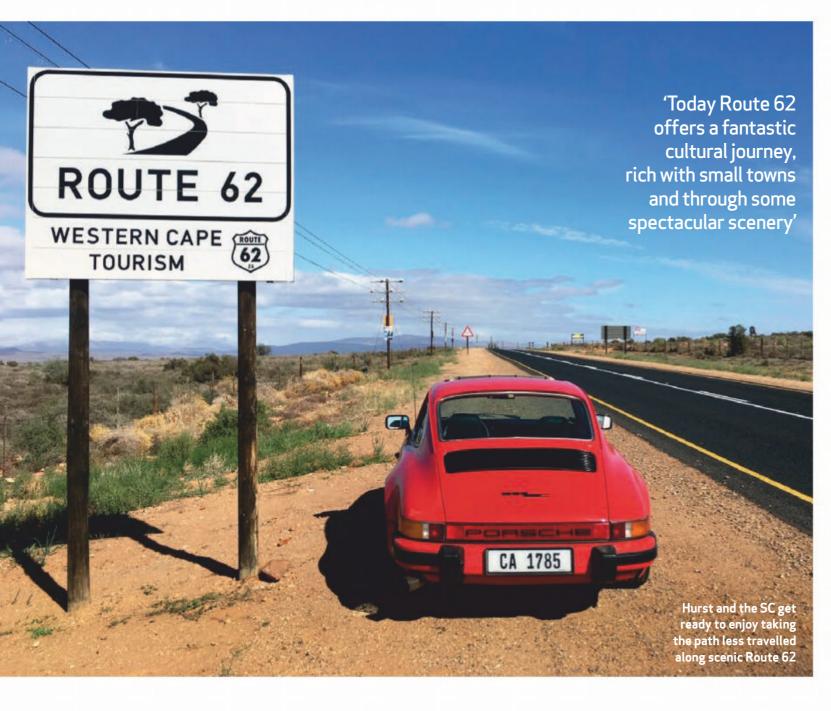


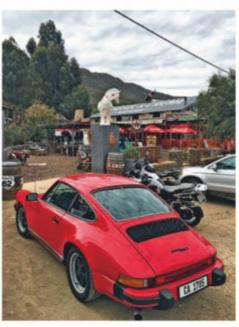
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Pitstop at Diesel & Crème in Barrydale



One of the 39 bends of the Huisrivier Pass

A DRIVE PORSCHES WERE MADE FOR



PORSCHE 911SC **RUN BY** Graeme Hurst **OWNED SINCE** April 2015 PREVIOUS REPORT Nov 2016

When I was lucky enough to get the keys to the SC nearly five years ago, the post-purchase adrenalin rush ended with some big bills instead of the big drives I'd dreamed about. With two engineout sessions (to sort a blown airbox and a fried engine wiring loom) I wondered what else lay ahead for my depleted pockets.

Thankfully, I can report that the flat-six has been fantastically on the button since, with my wallet damage limited to 450 Rand (£24) for a set of pedal rubbers. And, what's more, the SC has taken two cross-country trips – the first a

400km weekend trip to the winelands town of Bonnievale soon after my previous report, and the second a c1500km round trip to take in 'classic car week' in Knysna. This annual, week-long calendar fixture in the beautiful coastal lagoon region some five hours' drive east of Cape Town is bookended by the Knysna Motor

Abandoned Austin pick-up provides a bit of automotive intrigue at a Karoo Boom padstal

Show and the Simola Hill Climb... our local equivalent of Pebble Beach and the Festival of Speed.

It's a fantastic gathering that pulls cars and driving talent from around the country, and indeed across the globe. And for most local petrolheads, getting there and back is all part of the fun, especially with the adjacent topography having been conquered by some famous road engineers with various passes built over the past 100 years.

Work commitments meant that I had to settle for a direct, 490km blast along the N2, the country's national motorway along the southern coast. But I made up for it on my return trip with a full day dedicated to enjoying the SC on Route 62. This regional inland route spans the Western Cape from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth. It was once the key road between those cities, but – much like the downfall of America's famed Route 66 – the establishment of a new national highway (the N2) led to its demise some 50 years ago.

Today Route 62 offers a fantastic cultural journey, rich with small towns and through some of the province's most spectacular scenery, which various tourism organisations market heavily.

Starting in Knysna meant that I had to make my way north along the N12 over the Outeniqua mountains to get to the inland town of Oudtshoorn, world famous in the early 20th century for its ostrich feathers. But the connector route



was hardly a chore because this section boasts two passes: the Montagu and Outeniqua. The first offers 126 corners along its 17km length but it's all on 911-unfriendly gravel, which meant I was relegated to the latter with a mere 40 corners dotted across a 4km-shorter stretch of Tarmac. That still translated into a lot of fun in 911 speak, as I surfed the 3-litre's torque in third gear before reaching the summit of the 745m pass, where the lush coastal forests give way to the semi-arid desert of the Karoo region.

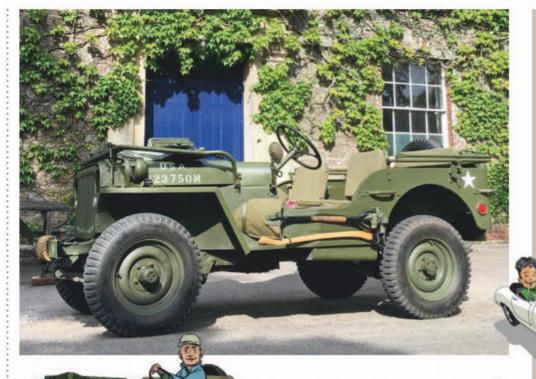
At Oudtshoorn I turned on to Route 62 and headed 48km west to Calitzdorp, a regional town that services the local cattle farms. This stretch of road soon dished up a uniquely South African retail institution in the form of a padstal – an Afrikaans name for a roadside store selling local refreshments. They also typically have gardens featuring the occasional rusted-out shell of an old car, as was the case with the remains of an Austin pick-up at Karoo Boom.

There were more vintage delights in the antiques shops of the various towns I passed through before the second major crossing of the day, the Huisrivier Pass. This 330m summit offers 39 bends over its 13km extent, all of them on pristine Tarmac, meaning I could enjoy the SC's supreme traction without fretting about the rear end getting twitchy over potholes or undulations.

The town of Ladismith, which is 249 miles from Cape Town (according to an old railway sign) followed soon after, as did one of the Karoo's more amusing landmarks: Ronnie's Sex Shop. More than two decades ago it was a humble farm shop, to whose painted sign the owner's mates added the word 'sex' to amuse locals. It certainly did after the place was issued with a liquor licence and women began pinning their underwear to the ceiling!

More visual entertainment followed half an hour down the road when I stopped at Diesel & Crème in Barrydale. This vintage diner has plenty of roadside memorabilia from the country's past, along with excellent burgers and sublime (if coronary-inducing) double-thick milkshakes.

I drove off my gastronomic indulgence with a spirited blast over the nearby Tradouw Pass. With windows and sunroof wide open, it was a final chance to bask in the flat-six growl as it consumed the cool autumn air before I made a beeline for Cape Town. A fitting end to the sort of big drive I'd had in mind when I first bought the car. Wire should prevent another wingnut loss



HOTCHKISS M201 **RUN BY James Mann OWNED SINCE Sept 2018 PREVIOUS REPORT Sept 2019**

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The Jeep remains my only classic transport as the Mustang GT languishes in the repair shop with bills mounting. I'm still in the honeymoon period after a year's ownership and it gives me that warm fuzzy feeling when I park up and glance back at its flat camo paint and harsh bodywork angles. My daughter made me a fabulous cake in the shape of the car for my birthday and we celebrated with a run down to the Seymour Arms in Witham Friary (above).

This Victorian flint-fronted railway hotel now just offers simple fare through a hatch at the end of the entrance hall, with lino on the floor and strip lighting. The only



Intake splitter disintegrated on removal



entertainment is a tired bar billiards table in the corner: it's like stepping back to another time, when US Air Force personnel might have driven their Jeeps the few miles from nearby Zeals Airfield for a pint.

The Jeep has always been a bit smoky on start-up and needs extra fuel via the choke when going up long hills, so when I saw that Dallas Autoparts had a carburettor repair kit for the Solex M32 I bought it for £18. I don't have a manual for this carb because the Jeep originally had a Carter unit, so I took it apart very carefully, watching out for pinging springs and small parts falling out.

In the end it was straightforward as I removed each part and replaced it with a new one from the repair kit, with gaskets and diaphragms all fitting nicely back together, and the car now runs more sweetly. One interesting component I had never seen before was a splitter mounted into the intake manifold; it broke up when I removed the old one, but I fitted a new part inexpensively.

Picking up my son from a cricket match, I noticed that one of the wingnuts that secure the 'screen had fallen off. Retracing our steps, we spotted it lying in the road. It's common practice to wire these on, and they already have a hole drilled to do this, so I fitted some pictureframing wire that will hopefully prevent any future mishaps.

Another job I've undertaken is to grease the numerous nipples in the chassis, drivetrain and suspension. I counted 12 but there are more shown in the workshop manual.

Speaking with a fellow Jeep owner who, like me, had run a Big Healey, he reminded me of the Austin connection via American Bantam, which sold Austin cars in the US. It was the company that came up with the basic Jeep design back in 1940, but was too small to build the volume of vehicles the US government required, so the plans were handed to Willys and Ford.

JAGUAR E-TYPE S1

What an incentive to get the car sorted: Jaguar Heritage has announced that 60 E-types will go to Geneva in 2021 for the car's 60th birthday. BOO went on the 50th, so

won't want to miss this one. Start saving, Cauter! GC

LANCIA GAMMA BERLINA

The Gamma is now MoT'd and an official Historic Vehicle. I've got lights but still no electric windows, and the sill trims are on, but I could do with the correct type because they don't sit flush. I need a radio. too, or better still the mythical delete panel that Andy Collins keeps taunting me with. MB



HWM-CHEVROLET

The Stovebolt is back from

winter fettling with Sean

McClurg, and a rolling-road session has finally dealt with a persistent slow-running problem. The solution was to synchronise its three twinchoke carbs and get

the complex throttle linkage right. The power/torque figures were interesting, too... ST

VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE

The pattern wings fitted just a few years ago were already crying out for replacement due to rot, but an altercation with a post means that need is now more urgent. Add a knackered clutch, holed exhaust and rusty heat exchangers and I could do with finding a generous parts supplier soon! MP









VW 1600 TYPE 3

RUN BY Damon Cogman OWNED SINCE 2003 PREVIOUS REPORT January

When this whole escapade started, I'm sure I said to my old friend Sam Anker: "Let's just get the wings off, give it a once-over, clean it up and get it back running for me to use as my daily classic again." How much can there be to do, right?

......

Oh, how awry that particular nugget of optimism has gone. Six months, several thousand pounds, many hours of labour and endless scraping, sanding, welding, grinding and more welding later has left me and Sam dangerously close to actually having the car ready. For a full repaint, that is.

Because of varying amounts of corrosion in virtually every panel, inside and out, the only option is a full respray. The 52-year-old shell was mostly in decent condition, but lots of small bits and pieces meant everywhere needed attention.

Interestingly, the doors were in good shape. 'Great,' I thought, 'no welding needed here.' Again, blind optimism was replaced by the crushing reality of finding an earlier 'repair' with lots of 1970s filler on a parking ding in one door that required more metal patching.

With the Christmas turkey still lingering, the day after Boxing Day Sam and I donned our overalls,

braved the cold, cracked open the workshop door and got stuck in to the final push to get the rolling shell ready for the paint shop. Everything that could be removed has gone into a worryingly big pile of glass, trim, handles, seals and unidentifiable screws, bolts and washers. I'm sure I'll remember where it all goes...

One job I didn't enjoy massively was the squirting of Dinitrol cavity wax into every nook and cranny I could find. When I ran out of places to squirt the runny brown stuff, I drilled small holes in the chassis and squirted some more. Rubber bungs prevented it running back out again, but it still seemed to be seeping out of tiny seams hours later. Hopefully, a regular regime of

Previous filler repair replaced with metal

further applications will prevent me from having to be welding upside down for a few years to come.

Between all this, though, I managed

to do some fun stuff, too. The once-scruffy gold and polished Porsche 914 Mahle alloys have been treated to a fresh powdercoat in metallic bronze. I've owned my old VW for many years and every few years I quite like a change, and wheel colour is a bit like hair colour – it can always be switched back if you change your mind. I know it's not to everyone's taste, but that's what owning something a bit different is all about, isn't it?

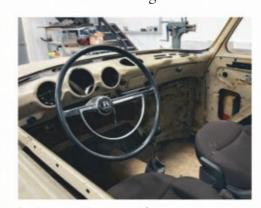
As the build progressed, I was

'Bullet' door mirrors will tuck in to body

increasingly influenced by trying to emulate a lo-fi version of the heroworshipped Singer Porsche. Ambitious, I know, bearing in mind my budget and base material differences. Nevertheless, a few custom touches have crept in.

The chrome side-trim has been deleted and the holes welded up for a smoother profile; I never liked the way the Type 3's swage line that runs front to back has a piece of trim an inch below it because it's all a bit messy. I've also swapped the ugly wide door mirror for something a little more compact, which will probably mean a reduced field of rear vision. Ah, well, at least I'll have one on each side from now on.

A few other styling tweaks mean it will be an even more unusual car once the final coat of Savanna Beige goes on at the end of February. Then the job of fitting it all back together starts, which is apparently the fun bit. I'm not going to indulge in that kind of crazy idealism just yet, but what I do know is that I can't wait to have it all bolted back together and parked outside my house ready to start putting many thousands of miles on it all over again.



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condenser, rotor arm and cap among other things, before being tested and given the seal of approval.

Based on advice, I also asked the Doctor for a new coil – a Pertronix Flame Thrower to be specific. The coil *in situ* was still the one that was fitted when I picked up the Series II, so it had done well to last this long. But fitting the overhauled distributor and Flame Thrower ensured the 88in immediately burst into life and, after a little tinkering with the timing, idled smoothly.

To my shame, I also realised that it had been a good while since I had last checked the valve clearances and spark plugs. With feeler gauge in hand I did both, opting to fit a new set of BP6RS plugs and open up the gap to 35-thou thanks to the new coil.

LAND-ROVER SERIES II

RUN BY Martin Port OWNED SINCE Sept 2016 **PREVIOUS REPORT** January

The highlight of the November classic calendar is without doubt the NEC Classic Motor Show. In 2016, just weeks after towing the Series II out of its Shepherd's Bush hiding place, the Trans-Africa made its show debut on the Classic & Sports Car stand. That was a great honour, of course, and, although the Land-Rover has been a regular in the car park since, for 2019 it was on display inside once more.

...........

The Land Rover Series 2 Club had chosen expedition vehicles as the theme for its stand and had requested the presence of the 88in some months ago. I was only too glad to oblige and duly filled the back with the usual 'mini museum' of items original to the vehicle. At the end of a long weekend, though, I was eager to get home and all was going well on a 'spirited' run down the M40. It was on the A34 just

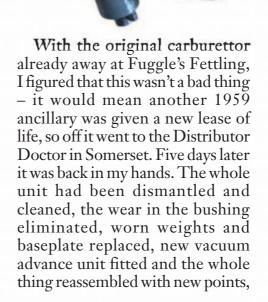
north of Newbury that things went a little awry: I normally come off at this point and enjoy the backroads, but as I stuck to the dual carriageway and planted my foot to make it up one of the larger hills I began to regret that decision.

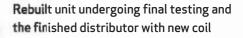
This was the second NEC appearance for the SII

With a series of pops and splutters coming from under the bonnet, the Land-Rover began to lose power and I found myself nursing it up the incline in second gear. Easing off once over the brow of the hill, I then managed to slowly build up some speed again and pulled into a fuel station to check the situation. The mini 'explosions' had blown

the air cleaner intake off the top of the carburettor, but, apart from that, all seemed okay and I continued the final three miles before the problem repeated itself and I nursed it on to the driveway.

The following morning it started on the button and ran well before spluttering and losing power once again. A compression test proved that, although desperately tired, the engine didn't have any major issues so I started swapping ignition components. Suddenly, I lost all spark. A spare condenser, rotor arm, distributor cap and coil didn't help, so I made a drastic decision: it was time to have the whole distributor rebuilt.





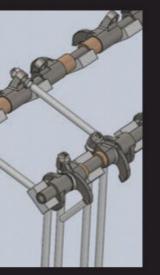
The first road test was a little nerve-wracking, naturally. Had I spent money on the ignition set-up, only to find out that it was something else causing the running issue? Only time would tell, and over the course of the next few days I tried to put on as many miles as I could. Fortunately, all seemed well and I suspect that it was a combination of distributor wear and failing coil and condenser to blame. Either way, I now know that the distributor is good for another 60 years, which is more than I can say for the clutch master cylinder.

As I clambered into the Series II to go to an important meeting, I noticed a small dribble of fluid making its way down the pedal. Another year, another master cylinder. They really don't make these things like they used to...

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RANGE ROVER RUN BY Martin Buckley OWNED SINCE March 2012 PREVIOUS REPORT May 2019

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The Range Rover is no longer under imminent threat of being sold, which suits me fine because I'm very fond of it. With the Mercedes estate out of commission it has become my daily car, in fact, alternating with a 20-year-old Toyota Yaris. It's been used for collecting a new sofa, taking a load of automobilia to a vintage shop, running over to see Andy Collins in Tiddlywinks (yes, really...) to collect a spare set of leather seats for my Gamma and transporting the dogs we inherited temporarily.

Running the gauntlet of the surly guardians of the various recycling bins, the Range Rover even makes the thought of the tip run bearable.

Having got it back on the road at the end of the summer, there was an initial running problem that was traced to plug leads breaking down. Using the car more regularly has also forced the issue on the long-running bonnet-catch saga, whereby it would close and lock but then pop on to its safety latch within a mile or two. The release cable had already snapped while the Range Rover was being detailed in Swansea, but a new cable didn't cure the fault and I finally bought a complete mechanism from Famous Four, which appears to have effected a solution.

At the same time, Mike Connor at Purley Road Garage sorted a 'screen washer motor, about the

third I've had on this car, I'm certain. A more pressing problem with the engine emerged whereby it would want to drop its tickover, not fire on all eight cylinders and generally lose the will to live but was irritatingly inconsistent as to when the symptoms occurred. Sometimes it wouldn't start at all and, after I wiggled various leads and wires, would suddenly burst into life at the first flick of the key. In other words, a really irritating ignition system fault.

Connor thought he'd identified the culprit as a suppressor on the distributor that was failing and going to earth, and removed it. Within a day it was up to its old tricks. The coil and the electronic ignition were then the likely candidates simply by a process of elimination, though I can't ever remember a coil failing on any car I have ever owned.

Sure enough it was the electronic ignition, a cheap and until now very effective system fitted a couple of years ago. Luckily I had another



Bonnet issues have seemingly been cured

new one in a box that Chris Bishop at Bishop's Heritage gave me when he fitted the original. Thus, it's back to its lusty self again.

So the 'to do' list is a little shorter, but I'd still like a new set of carpets to freshen up the interior, to work out why the windows will only wind halfway down and do something about the slightly crusty sliders for the side windows.



LINCOLN
COSMOPOLITAN
RUN BY Julian Balme
OWNED SINCE 1991
PREVIOUS REPORT Jan 2019

As intimated in my previous report on the faithful Lincoln, confidence in the performance of the radiator had diminished on the return leg from the 2018 Le Mans Classic. I eventually took it out and dropped it off with Colin Mullan, because my local man shut-up shop a while ago. Lee Terry at GT Radiator Services found that it was clogged beyond flushing and recommended a new core. It now runs perfectly.

Not so perfect was the flasher unit, the demise of which caused mayhem. "Cool car but your brake lights don't work and I don't know where you're going," a helpful white-van driver shouted to me on the Kingston bypass. Always choosing the cheapest option, I changed some fuses to no avail. So I changed the brake-light switch. Nothing. It didn't occur to me that the flasher unit was connected, but because the rear lights, indicators and brake lights all go through the same bulb, it's one out, all out. Needless to say, Adam from Down To Earth sussed that almost immediately when he made his annual visit for a day of fixing various electrical woes on the fleet.

On lights, Hershey swapmeet turned up a rare and satisfying treasure: a rear lens. I know, hold on to your hat. But the nearside rear light has always given the impression that it was powered by candle rather than electricity, the light lens having melted way back when.

Trouble is, '54 Lincoln rear light assemblies are a rare commodity, not least because of their use among Kustomisers. And suitably overpriced as a result. What I didn't realise, until speaking to the vendor manning my plastic klondyke, is that the lens came in two halves, a red outer and clear inner. "Why don't you just buy one of the clear inners?", he growled. Twenty bucks, saving \$330. Happy days.

Other than that 2019 was fairly uneventful. Wooly looked the part at the London Concours – it's amazing what a following it has – and we enjoyed being reunited with Mick Clements, who hand-painted a lot of its graphics including the charging bull on the hood. He lives



Split rear light set-up saved Balme bucks

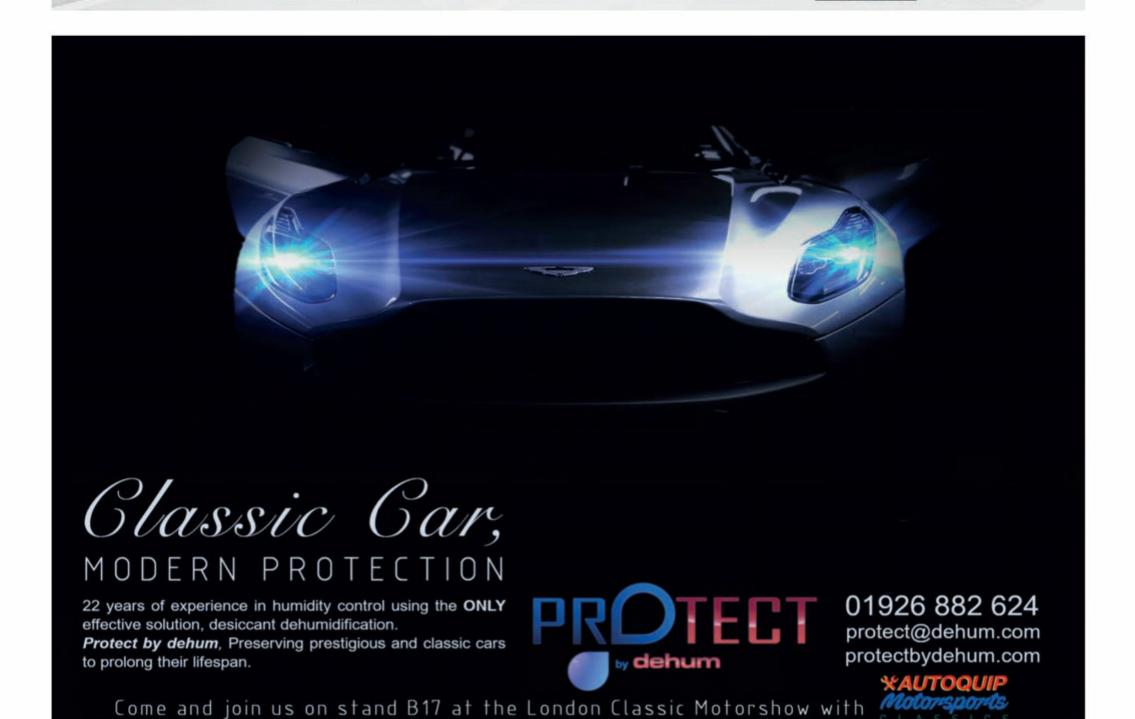
in Costa Rica so I rarely see him, but we had a great sentimental Saturday evening at the Chelsea Cruise, which we frequented in the mid-'80s. That and some day trips completed last year's dance card, so for 2020 I need to find something more challenging for car and driver.

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OWNED BY Doug Partington FROM Queensland, Australia FIRST CLASSIC This car DREAM CLASSIC 2005 Ford GT or a Lincoln KB V12 twin-'screen Phaeton. I raced and rallied a Ferrari Dino 246GTS in the '80s and that was pretty good! BEST TRIP Lapping the banked corners of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in August 2019

.....

Like many other youngsters born in the shadows of WW2, I was infatuated with the need for speed. It was the era of fighter pilots, Spitfires and Mustangs, and my hero of heroes was *Biggles*. Captain WE Johns had created James Bigglesworth of the RAF prior to the war, so he naturally became the hero to many of us. 'Biggles' and his contempary real-life characters gave us boys dreams of speed and adventure.

I was five years old when the Formula One World Drivers' Championship was first offered, too, further adding to my need. And on a fateful day in 1958 my opportunity came: an advertisement in our city's newspaper read, 'Old Ford Racing Car for sale, £20.' Excitement led to an inspection and a £14 purchase – I was as proud as a 14-year-old could be.

Three years and a borrowed trailer later I made my debut with my racer at a vintage parade during a Tasman Series meeting at Lakeside Raceway, Queensland.

All my heroes were there – Jack Brabham, Denny Hulme, Bruce McLaren, Jim Clark, Graham Hill, Lorenzo Bandini and more – and so was I. The car was dreadfully slow but I met the late Tom Sulman, who recognised the Ford.

"Put it away and come back to it later," was Dad's call, so the RAJO, as it was referred to at the time because of its RAJO overhead-valve conversion, was sent to the back of the shed while I drove any car I could beg, borrow or steal.

The Model T special had to wait 30 years for information to come to light that identified it as the Wikner Ford Special. Brothers Geoff and Roy Wikner built it in 1922 at Leura in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, New South Wales. They raced the two-seater at Penrith and

the beach track at Gerringong, and the car took part in the first event on the concrete Maroubra Speedway in December 1925.

This information and period newspaper articles were sent to the historic committee of CAMS, the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport, who judged it worthy of a Historic Log Book and Certificate of Description under the banner of the FIA. That was 25 years ago,



Drawing attention at the Dearborn festival

and I have competed in around 50 events with total reliability since. Never have I enjoyed coming last so often and with so much fun.

I've always been a Model T enthusiast, and just two years prior to the Wikner purchase my dad had bought his ideal old car: a 1912 Model T Touring. We still enjoy it, almost 40 years since his passing.

I was always a dreamer, and Dad fed my ideas with stories of the magic abilities of Henry's wonderful T. Still dreaming in my 70s, I decided that I would fulfil my boyhood dreams and take my 97-year-old racer to the USA and run the fantasy tracks of my youth. We did it in 2019, at the Milwaukee Mile, the Iowa Speedway (the current Indycars were also there) and the vintage race meet at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

We also took part in the Speedsters Reunion at the Museum of American Speed in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the Old Car Festival at the Henry Ford Museum's Greenfield Village. The Wikner was even inducted into its speedster and racer Hall of Fame.

For a car built from very humble 1918 Model T Ford components by two young Australians (who went on to build aircraft for the War Office), together we have enjoyed marvellous success. And, in the process, perpetuated the legend of the Model T Ford, the car that put the world on wheels.

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TIMGUNN

The Goodwood stalwart turned television star and lover of all things mechanical

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY MICK WALSH

im Gunn has always split his interest between cars and bikes, with vintage cyclecars perfectly combining both. Goodwood Revival visitors will recognise him as the proprietor of the classic cycle shop, but his connection goes right back to the press day for the first Festival of Speed Soapbox Racing Challenge. "Richard Sutton asked me to build a vintage-style soapbox in two weeks," recalls Gunn. "At the press day I lined up at the top of the hill with Sir Stirling Moss to the right and Barry Sheene to the left. Talk about nervous!"

Gunn's cycle shop has been a popular feature since the first Revival, and when the event celebrated the Tour de France in 2014, Gunn was a key contributor: "I met a collector with an amazing set of classic TdF support vehicles at an event in Brittany. Sir Chris Hoy even rode my 1960 Rosignoli Cross around Goodwood."

Growing up around vintage cars – his father Colvin was a respected specialist and raced MGs with the Vintage Sports-Car Club – Gunn's enthusiasm covers anything mechanically interesting: "Dad taught me to braze, weld and use a lathe. Growing up on our farm was always inspiring. I fell in love with bicycles when I saw someone riding a penny-farthing. My first old bike was a 1930s BSA Roadster, which I took on the VSCC's Boulogne bike ride. It had a bottle-

ALSO IN MY GARAGE



opener on the handlebar and a crate of beer on the back – I ended up in the ditch!"

The design crossover between bicycles, cars and even aircraft, particularly French machines, has always appealed: "I had an Austin Seven Ulster, but after seeing a cyclecar display at the VSCC Malvern Rally I was hooked. Bob Jones sent me a 1913 copy of *How to Build a Cyclecar* and I began collecting bits to construct my own. The Grafton was built around a Lewis engine and made its debut at Vintage Montlhéry, one of my favourite events, but after one lap it seized. It's now a regular of the wonderful Festival of

Slowth. Cycling has always been in our blood and we still have my grandad's 1934 three-speed Golden Sunbeam, which he bought new."

Bicycle projects with car connections have even included building a Bugatti: "I made it for Lancia man Gerald Batt. It was designed by Carlo Bugatti and we only had one photo, which I scaled up using the wheel diameter. With a small wheel up front, it was hideously dangerous and kept wanting to throw you off the back." Among other inspired builds are a replica of the first bike with a chain-drive rear wheel, designed by Henri Lawson, and a fantasy GN-style machine built for the Italian L'Eroica event: "I dreamt it up with my friend Cally Colloman. It looked very vintage, with 12 gears through three different changes. It felt brilliant riding it into Siena."

Gunn loves nothing more than fixing and restoring old machines. During the past two years he's been part of the team on the BBC's *The Repair Shop* as its bicycle expert: "A recent episode had 5.6 million viewers watching me rebuild a Raleigh Chopper. It's bizarre when I get recognised walking around Sainsbury's."

As well as his cyclecars and bicycles, Gunn has an early pedal-powered helicopter design. "It was discovered in France and is rumoured to be the work of Henri Coandă, the aerodynamics pioneer," he says. "I've set it up in the garden but we've never got it off the ground."

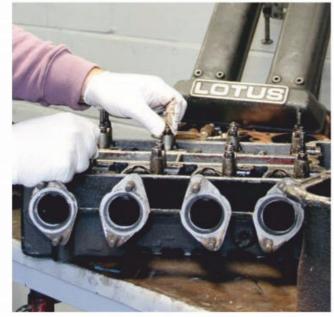




E-type being recommissioned after standing for years



Lotus Seven S4 is another longer-term rebuild project



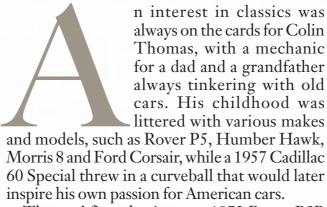
Twin-Cam is heading for comprehensive overhaul work

THE SPECIALIST

SKY-HIGH STANDARD

There's more to Brixworth than Mercedes-Benz's F1 engines, as Clouds Hill Classics proves

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY MARTIN PORT



Thomas' first classic was a 1972 Rover P5B saloon and he cut his teeth in the early 1980s with an apprenticeship at his local Austin Rover dealership in Northampton. He continued to learn his trade at a number of garages until, in 1994, he decided to set up his own business.

From then until 2004 Thomas was contracted to carry out everything from valeting and delivery driving to servicing with Westaway Motors. Filling spare time with other clients, he became involved with a less-than-reputable classic car 'dealer' - who proceeded to disappear with Thomas' considerable financial investment.

Some might have opted to get a run-of-the-mill job instead, but the experience made Thomas even more determined to be his own boss. The concept behind Clouds Hill Classics was born in 2007 with the help of friends Geoff and Jeanette Dawson. The trio formed the basis of the business; Geoff hired a large barn close to

Brixworth and the space was split to create a classiccar workshop and storage for up to 14 vehicles.

Using a Ford Explorer and trailer, Thomas would deliver cars across the country while the business slowly expanded. Within two years, word of mouth recommendations meant that classics were queuing for workshop space.

"It was time to move to the next stage," explains Thomas. "We needed a proper workshop, one

that was more permanent. So Geoff and Jeanette bought the old youth club in Brixworth." That was in 2013 and the business has only grown.

"Because we will work on almost anything classic and aren't restrictive in our specialism," he continues, "we've been fortunate enough to have some wonderful vehicles in the workshop. Everything from a 1947 Chrysler Town and Country to Willys Jeeps, '60s Alfas, MGs and Rolls-Royces have come through the doors."

The workshop is currently home to a 1972 Volkswagen Type 2 camper and a 1973 Jaguar E-type V12 – the former in for a brake and suspension overhaul, a new distributor, a carburettor rebuild and electrical work; the latter is being recommissioned. A 1970 Lotus Seven S4 chassis is propped up against a wall, Twin-Cam stripped ready for inspection. A fourbarrel Holley carb set-up from a '69 AC Cobra awaits attention and a Jaguar Mk2 cylinder head is being worked on – the Cobra is Thomas' 'one I wish I could take home' choice!

Clouds Hill Classics has excellent links with other specialists who can fulfil any demands that can't be done in-house. "We are very lucky in terms of our location," Thomas says. "We have a fabrication shop and a precision engineering specialist within walking distance, so it's easy, quick and cost-effective to get parts made."

Thomas only runs one classic these days, a 1997 V8 Jaguar X300. "Having time to work

> on your own cars is the problem," he laughs. He's previously owned everything from Austin and Alvis to Cadillac and Lincoln, and his dream classic is a Duesenberg.

> The diary at Clouds Hill Classics is full, so it looks as if Thomas had the last laugh after that unscrupulous dealer. "Determination always wins in the end," he smiles before returning, spanner in hand, to the engine bay of the VW Type 2.





Tweaking the Solex carb of a VW Type 2

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AUCTION YEAR STUTTERS INTO LIFE

The Scottsdale auction week in Arizona from 11-19 January started the new year with a mixture of comparative bargains and marquee lots struggling. Hagerty calculates that sales were down on 2019, from \$251m to \$244.1m, and sellthrough rate dropped 4% to 77%.

But there was plenty of intrigue, such as the tale of two Ferrari F50s: the *prototipo* went unsold at \$2.5m with Worldwide, while \$3,222,500 was paid at Gooding & Co for the 48th of the 350-car run. The latter was the week's highest-priced lot.

Second was Barrett-Jackson's 2020 C8 Corvette VIN 001, which raised \$3m for charity. Nine lots, including a 1981 Jeep that sold three times, combined to raise a total of \$7.625m for good causes.

A 1958 Ferrari 250GT and 1965 275GTB went unsold at RM Sotheby's, where the costliest classic was a '67 330GTS (\$1.7m); a 2018 Pagani Huayra led at \$2.23m.

As British sports cars struggled to get near estimates, including an Aston Martin DB2/4 at \$112,000 (\$180-220,000), so notably did an Alfa Romeo SZ and Montreal. But one surprise was the \$720,000 paid for a 1991 Vector W8, more than double its \$300,000 lower estimate.

It was a similar story at Gooding, but model records set included its



Ferrari 330GTS found a new home at \$1.7m

second-best seller, a 1932 Hispano-Suiza J12 that fetched \$2.425m (\$1.5-2m), and a 1990 Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evo II that sold for \$434,000 (\$340-380k).

Yet a no-reserve 1956 Fiat 1110/103 E TV Coupé changed hands for \$95,000, almost \$200,000

shy of its upper guide, and a 1961 Bentley S2 Continental Drophead Coupé achieved \$156,000 against a slated \$240-280,000. In contrast, a no-reserve 1937 BMW 328 easily doubled its lower estimate to \$830k.

At Bonhams, the headlining 1932 Alfa Romeo 8C-2300 failed to sell on the night, leaving a 1951 212 Inter Cabriolet to take top spot at \$1.93m (\$2-2.4m). No other lot surpassed seven figures, but the first Dodge Viper – and from the Lee Iacocca collection – tripled its lower estimate and sold for \$285,500 (\$100-185k). While 20 of the 108 lots went unsold, they were solely at the higher end.

RECORD PRICE FOR **MOVIE MUSTANG**

The Ford Mustang has a new record price at auction, courtesy of one of the most famous examples of all: the 1968 GT that co-starred with Steve McQueen in the film Bullitt.

Stored for the past 40 years, during which its owner even rebuffed McQueen's enquiries, the car was believed 'lost' until it emerged in 2018 and was dispatched on a world tour in partnership with Ford for the 50th anniversary of the film.

The unrestored Mustang's price quickly rose to \$2.5m during Mecum's Kissimmee auction in Florida on 10 January, and telephone bidders edged it past the auction house's unpublished expectations to \$3.4m, or \$3.7m with fees.





Fine Lagonda on sale

A 1939 Lagonda V12 Drophead Coupé described by auctioneer H&H as among the very best examples will be one of the lead lots at its Duxford sale on 18 March.

Restored in 2006, seven decades after delivery to its first owner, it gained an unleaded fuel conversion, a new crankshaft, camshafts and conrods, plus forged Arias piston but the then-custodian died before the overhaul was completed. Finetuned since, the Lagonda's estimate is £300-400,000.

The car was maintained in the 1950s at a garage run by a former Lagonda service manager, and spent 40 years in a barn until it was sold by H&H in 2006. The V12 doubled its estimate, but was sold again in 2013 by H&H; it achieved £200,000 (est £300-400,000).



Lagonda as sold in 2006, unmoved for years

CCA ADDS FREE MEETS

Classic Car Auctions has confirmed dates for 11 Cars, Coffee and Consignment days in 2020, each taking place at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon, after trialling two events last year.

Registration in advance is required to claim one of the 20 valuation slots available at each, and those consigning cars will be given free professional photographs of their car. Museum entry will be free to all, too.

Auctions manager Gary Dunne said: "These events became very popular with owners thinking of selling but unsure of the value of their car and what to do. By coming and speaking with our team, it helped them with their decisions and all cars that came were later consigned at some point during the year."

View the full list of dates and book at classiccarauctions.co.uk



CCA is offering advice and valuations



All 20 of the Plus 4s are reserved

LIMITED-RUN PLUS 4

Morgan is celebrating both 70 years of the Plus 4 and the end of Malvern's steel-chassis platform with a 20-car special edition. The £69,995 Plus 4 70th Anniversary model will feature a gold-painted chassis and platinum-coloured body, plus a raft of extras inside.

The remapped 2-litre Ford engine will produce 180bhp, up from 154bhp, rev more freely and hit 60mph from standstill one second faster and within seven seconds.

Deliveries of the sold-out range will begin in April.

Landmark racers on offer

The Race Retro sale, hosted by Silverstone Auctions, will feature a pair of 1950s and '60s sports-racers with star-studded histories: a Jaguar XK120 roadster raced by Duncan Hamilton and Lotus 19 Monte-Carlo chassis 953.

It was after testing the 19 in 1963 that Stirling Moss decided he



LXF 731 scored five podiums at Goodwood



Race-winning Lotus 19 is freshly restored

should retire, following his nearfatal crash at Goodwood a year earlier. The car itself was no stranger to victory, though, with Olivier Gendebien, Graham Hill, Innes Ireland and Masten Gregory all taking wins, and even Jim Clark in 1964 after it had moved into privateer racers' hands.

Crashed in 1965, it sat untouched for three decades before passing through various owners. It will wear an estimate of £375-450,000.

The Jaguar XK120 can claim its own piece of history: it was the first Big Ĉat that 1953 Le Mans winner Hamilton raced. He handed LXF 731 its debut at the International Trophy at Silverstone in 1951, claiming third place behind Moss and Charlie Dodson in the first of a string of outings that season. Philip Fotheringham-Parker, its then owner, also pedalled the car at Goodwood that year including fifth at the International Meeting before selling LXF 731 at the end of the national racing season.

Its estimate is £400-500,000.

FEBRUARY

- 5 RM Sotheby's Paris, France 0033 1 76 75 32 93; rmsothebys.com
- **6 Bonhams** Paris, France 0033 1 42 61 10 11; bonhams.com
- 7 Artcurial Rétromobile, Paris, France 0033 1 42 99 20 73; artcurial.com
- 8 Mathewsons Pickering, North Yorkshire 01751 474455; mathewsons.co.uk
- **9 Charterhouse** Shepton Mallet, Somerset 01935 812277; charterhouse-auction.com
- **17 Shannons** Sydney Summer Classic, NSW, Australia 0061 2 8019 4116; shannons.com.au
- **22 Coys** The London Classic Car Show, Olympia London 020 8614 7888; coys.co.uk
- **22 Morris Leslie** Errol Airfield. Perth, Scotland 01821 642574; morrisleslie.com



1990 Lamborghini Countach 25th Anniversary on offer at Race Retro

22-23 Silverstone Auctions Race Retro, Stoneleigh,

Warwickshire 01926 691141: silverstoneauctions.com

- **25 Barons** Sandown Park Racecourse, Surrey 023 8066 8413; www.barons-auctions.com
- 29 Classicbid Retro Classics, Stuttgart, Germany 0049 6727 89718-100; classicbid.de

MARCH

- **2 Shannons** Melbourne Autumn Classic, Victoria, Australia 0061 280194116; shannons.com.au
- 4 Brightwells Leominster, Herefordshire 01568 611166; brightwells.com



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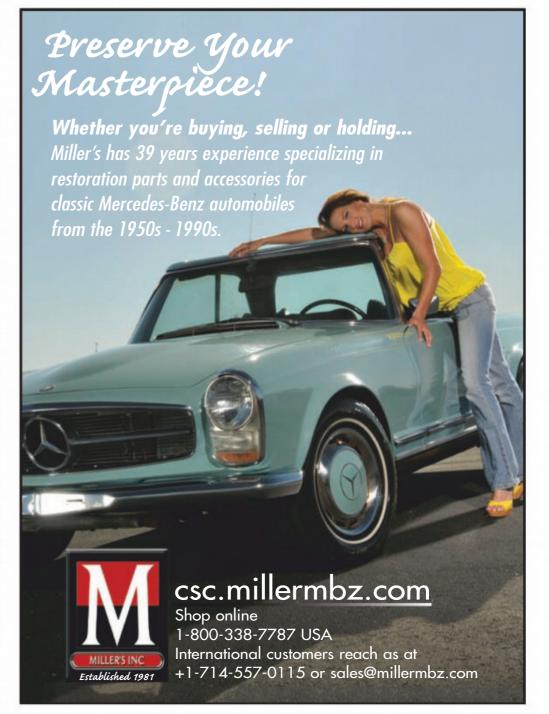
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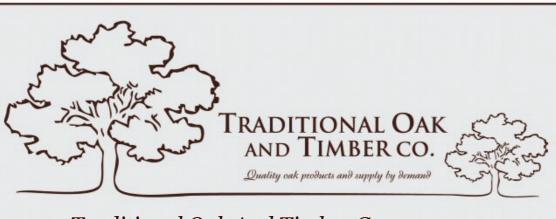
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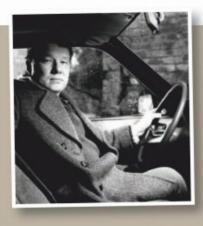






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Buckley's market marters

I went to see *Scandal*, the bigscreen portrayal of the Profumo affair, 30 years ago and I have been a keen follower of the story and its protagonists ever since.

John Hurt made a great
Stephen Ward, and Joanne
Whalley a very flattering Christine
Keeler. The only car-related cockup I can recall was the use of a
Rolls-Royce as the War Minister's
official limo: I'm fairly certain it
would have been a Princess.

If only the BBC's recent *The Trial of Christine Keeler* had so few howlers. It started well when I spotted a Lancia Appia but went downhill quickly from there. I'm fairly sure the CID would not have been using Austin A70 Herefords in 1963, or Rover 2000s. The latter wasn't introduced until later that year; the fact that one of them is a '70s chip-cutter-grille car has not escaped me, either.

I can forgive them being liberal with the cars used, as long as they get the years right. So it's fair enough that we see Profumo in an Alvis TD, although at the time he was filmed driving a Mk2 Jag.

But given that Ward's ownership of a XK150 drophead is so well documented (I think Scandal even used his actual car), you'd think they might have bothered to find one rather than the fixed-head (with a white steering wheel?) being driven by the excellent James Norton. All of this breaks the spell for me.

Getting the cars right seems so comparatively easy that it never fails to wind me up, especially when the Americans seem to get it right in series such as Mad Men.

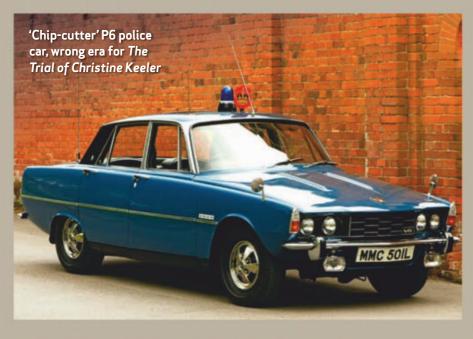
It's not a life-or-death matter, but you do wonder what else the BBC is lazily getting wrong.

Maybe it's not entirely its fault, because I think the world of supplying old cars is a close-knit one, where only a chosen few have an 'in' and the same cars turn up fairly frequently. I have no idea how it works, but we can assume the luvvies concerned simply get what they are given.

But why does accurately portraying cars come so far down the pecking order? I think it's indicative of a certain kind of snobbish, anti-car elitism that is somewhat peculiar to the arts, artists and their hangers-on in the TV and film world. Big Netflixtype budgets do not ensure accuracy, incidentally. I started The Spy recently, and was almost hooked until a 1970s Stutz limousine turned up when we were meant to be in the early '60s.

Another one of the Beeb's recent classic-car TV cock-ups was the Rover used by Jeremy Thorpe in A Very English Scandal. The scoundrel MP was well-known for his use of a Humber Imperial, but I would have cut them a bit of slack on the Rover if it had been a P5 on hubcaps rather than a P5B on RoStyles, a model still years from introduction when the events were unfolding.

Perhaps it's time the Buckley business empire was expanded to supply period-correct cars for the big and small screens...



AUCTION RESULTSDecember's top 50 sales



Highly original Aston Martin DB4GT is one of nine lightweights produced by the factory







Ford GT led the limited auctions Stateside

PRICE	CAR	SALE
£2,367,000	1961 Aston Martin DB4GT	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£644,583	1939 Frazer Nash-BMW 328	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£575,000	2001 Ferrari 550GTZ Barchetta	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£339,250	2017 Ferrari F12	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£324,300	1988 Aston Martin V8	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£235,750	1994 Aston Martin Virage	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£197,800	2013 Alfa Romeo 8C Spider	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£190,575	2005 Ford GT	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£177,870	1969 Ford Mustang fastback	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£147,333	2010 Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£139,755	1967 Chevrolet Corvette convertible	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£129,800	2014 Land Rover Defender Works V8	Barons, Christmas Classic, UK
£125,080	1965 Porsche 356	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£120,750	2001 Ferrari 550M	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£112,700	2009 Aston Martin DBS	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£109,250	2014 Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£100,700	1939 Rolls-Royce Wraith	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£99.523	1963 Chevrolet Corvette 'split-window' coupe	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£97,405	2018 Dodge Challenger	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£84,056	1971 Chevron B18	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£83,500	1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£82,140	1962 Jaguar E-type S1 roadster	CCA. Warwickshire. UK
		Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£77,420 £74,370	1992 Ferrari Testarossa	CCA, Warwickshire, UK
	1964 Jaguar E-type S1 fhc 1957 Chevrolet Corvette convertible	
£72,842 £70,784	1957 Studebaker Golden Hawk	Mecum, Kansas, USA Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland

£64,148	1973 Jaguar E-type S3	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£60,137	1954 Chevrolet Corvette roadster	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£59,724	2001 Wiesmann MF3	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£58,397	1963 Alfa Romeo Giulia Spider	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£57,800	1997 Porsche 911 (993) Carrera 4S	Classicbid, Retro Classics, Germany
£53,088	1976 Porsche 911	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£51,750	1965 Jaguar Mk2	Bonhams, Bond Street, UK
£50,876	1963 Jaguar MkX	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£50,434	1967 Morris Mini Cooper	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland
£49,973	1969 Chevrolet Chevelle	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£49,820	1988 BMW M3	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£45,580	1999 Subaru Impreza WRX STI 2dr	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£45,050	1961 Porsche 356	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£44,891	1956 Chevrolet Bel Air restomod	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£44,891	1970 Dodge Challenger T/A	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£44,845	1966 Austin-Healey 3000	RM Sotheby's, online auction, USA
£43,197	1967 Chevrolet Camaro	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£42,350	2016 Dodge Challenger	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£42,350	1970 Chevrolet Chevelle	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£42,350	1970 Pontiac Trans-Am	Mecum, Kansas, USA
£41,870	2006 Holden HSV	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£41,070	1964 Morris Mini Cooper	CCA, Warwickshire, UK
£40,015	1932 Ford 5-window coupe	Shannons, Melbourne, Australia
£39,816	1963 Chevrolet Corvair	Oldtimer Galerie, Switzerland

Prices include buyer's premium. Exchange rate used: \$1 = 75p. For our full database of sale results, see **www.classicandsportscar.com/auctions**

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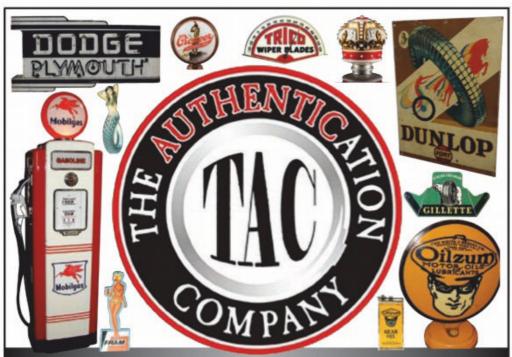
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FORD CONSUL, ZEPHYR&ZODIAC

The 'Five Star' Fords heralded a bright new world, and surviving Mk1s are highly usable classics



ord of Britain had established a strong following pre-WW2 for its small cars, which combined simple engineering and spacious bodies to put the middle classes on the road in considerably more comfort than the Austin Seven. The pre-war range was given a token post-war makeover to continue offering the cheapest 'proper' cars around, but in the growing market for a more luxurious model competition was hotting up and Ford was in danger of missing out with its aged V8-Pilot.

All this changed at the 1950 Motor Show, as the Blue Oval unveiled the new Consul and Zephyr. Gone was the old sidevalve V8, replaced by a state-of-the-art oversquare 1508cc 'four' and a six-cylinder version with the same bore and stroke (for commonality of internal parts), giving 2262cc. The Consul was 5mph faster than the V8-Pilot and the Zephyr was an 80mph car.

The styling was modern yet conservative, with European dimensions but making excellent use of the space available. The result was a comfortable monocoque saloon (or unitary construction, more accurately, because it had a hefty welded-on underframe) with six-seater

potential thanks to bench seats front and rear. The cars were identical behind the bulkhead, but the front end of the six-cylinder was 7in longer than the 'four', with the wheelbase 4in longer.

The cars were a revelation on the road, with the first production MacPherson strut front suspension – mounting a tall spring/damper just inboard of the wheel line would never have been possible with a separate chassis. The rubbermounted top swivel joint was complex, but made kingpins, trunnions and top wishbones obsolete, with just a lower link required. Braking forces were taken by the anti-roll bar. The new system provided good shock insulation and handling.

Another big step in isolating the occupants from mechanical harshness came with the first hydraulic clutch operation – though the three-speed 'box was a throwback: the higher-revving oversquare layout really needed more gears. The 'six' would get an overdrive option late in production, and many have been retrofitted.

Maurice Gatsonides won the 1953 Monte in a Zephyr, beating Jaguar – having posted his kids part-way down the descent on the final test, equipped with buckets of water and instructions to throw them over the front wheels when he passed, to reduce the inevitable brake fade!

TROUBLE SPOTS

CORROSION All cars will have been welded, so check it has been done properly and that rust isn't taking hold around past repairs

FRONT END Look for rot in the wings below the headlights, the front valance, the wheelarches and strut tops, and especially the rear of the wings where they meet the bulkhead and the A-posts

CENTRE SECTION The deep sills are prone to rot, as are floorpans and the extra cruciform on convertibles; door bottoms corrode, too

REAR END Look all around the edges inside the boot, as well as the rear arches and valances, and the bottom of the bootlid

CHROMEWORK Mazak pits under the chrome, and many parts are now hard to find

RUNNING GEAR Look for the usual signs of wear, such as smoke and rattles





Styled by American Ford designer George Walker, the new Consul, Zephyr and (as here) Zodiac brought full-width US styling on a smaller scale; sales would eclipse their **V8-Pilot predecessor**



Period road testers complimented the Fords on their light controls and great combination of a smooth ride and good cornering, though heavily front-biased weight distribution on both the 'four' and the 'six' caused wheelspin on slippery surfaces and made the tail step out if cornered hard in the wet; radial tyres help





The first of a long line, these were very modern **engines** for their time and many components are shared with later models; though visually almost identical, this is a Mk2'six'. As well as verifying originality, check for rattles and excess oil breathing indicating wear, and for signs of overheating from a silted-up radiator



The three-speed column gearchange should feel reasonably precise, with unbeatable synchro on second and top. This one has a period overdrive



Zephyr Zodiacs boasted two-tone leather **trim**, Zephyrs single-tone and Consuls leathercloth. All can be (expensively) revived by specialists



The revolutionary **front suspension** was well-engineered and strong, but wear in the steering box can cause excess play, and cracked mountings



Brightwork items are mostly difficult to find today, especially chromed Mazak parts and rare details such as these early 1954 rear lights



On the road

Ford was slow to respond to demand for more gears and power. The Zodiac had a little extra urge, and overdrive eventually arrived, but both these and far more had been available as aftermarket conversions for years from many specialists, especially for the 'six'. Period tuning kit adds value, but non-period 'custom' work, unless it's very well done, does not and can be costly to put back to original.

Running-gear parts are widely available new and used, and the conventional design means mechanical work is rarely expensive: concentrate on finding a car with good bodywork and adjust the price if mechanical work is needed.

The convertible hood was an engineering triumph, electro-hydraulically operated from the coupé de ville position to fully down – and could return to that raised position without stopping the car. Make sure it all works and the top material is good – rebuilding can be costly.

Ford controls were all notably light for the time, so expect them to be still. The brakes (large drums combined with small 13in wheels) should feel effective, only suffering fade when really pressing on. Fortunately, Ford adopted 12V electrics for these cars, but the wipers were still vacuum-operated, albeit boosted a bit by a vacuum pump beneath the fuel pump.

In spite of the small wheels, the steering lock is poor and the steering box was one of the more old-fashioned features, with multiple links and an idler to wear as well: budget to rebuild the system if there's excessive play.

OWNING ONE



"I learnt to drive in a Consul," recalls **John Ball**, "and I've always wanted a Zodiac.
I couldn't afford them back in the day, so when I retired I bought one – and now I've got four! A red Zephyr came first, then this Zodiac, then a Consul to restore and

finally a black Zodiac, which is my next project.

"My Consul had been with one owner since 1960 – it was in really bad condition, I had to jig it behind the spring hangers at the back. The club does a lot of parts, including properly pressed floorpans. I finished it in time for the previous owner's 100th birthday and took him for a run in it: he was like a kid at Christmas!

"This Zodiac wasn't too bad, only needing a small amount of welding, plus rechroming and I've fitted a new radiator and brakes. The rare original rear lights were in a box."

"I've always wanted a Zodiac but couldn't afford them back in the day. When I retired I got one – now I have four!"

ALTERNATIVES



MORRIS OXFORD/SIX MO/MS

1948-'54, 172,360 built

Expensive, especially in six-cylinder form, the Morris struggled for sales – not aided by looking like the smaller Minor, and the Oxford's gutless sidevalve. **Price now** £3-8k



VAUXHALL WYVERN/VELOX/CRESTA E

1951-'57, 545,388 built

Vauxhall showed Ford the way to go with a larger, more Transatlantic-looking saloon that flew out of the showrooms. Its tendency to rust means few survive. **Price now** £6-12k

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THE KNOWLEDGE

TIMELINE

1950 Oct Ford Consul (47bhp) and Zephyr (68bhp) saloons launched at Earls Court 1951 Jan Consul on sale in UK; Zephyr Feb 1951 Oct Zephyr Six convertible shown on Carbodies' stand

1952 Sep 'Flat dash' replaced by curved cowled panel with shelf below; Zephyr conventers production, with three-position hood 1953 Oct Zephyr Zodiac joins the range: 71bhp high-compression engine, two-tone paint and trim, whitewalls, features include screenwash and reversing light; also Consul convertible and Abbott of Farnham Estate 1954 Nov Modified block casting for new flywheel and clutch

1955 Aug Borg-Warner overdrive optional **1956 Feb** Mk1 replaced by Mk2

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1950-'56/231,481 **Construction** steel monocoque

Engine all-iron, overhead-valve 1508cc 'four' or 2262cc 'six', with single Zenith carburettor

Max power 47bhp @ 4400rpm to 71bhp @ 4200rpm

Max torque 72lb ft @ 2400rpm to 108lb ft @ 2000rpm

Transmission three-speed, two-synchro manual, RWD; optional overdrive on six-cylinder cars from 1955

Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar rear live axle, semi-elliptic springs, lever-arm dampers

Steering Burman worm and peg Brakes Girling 9in (229mm) drums Length 14ft 3³/₄in (4366mm)

Width 5ft 4in (1626mm) **Height** 4ft 11½in (1511mm) **Wheelbase** 8ft 8in (2642mm)

Weight 2436-2660lb (1107-1209kg)

0-60mph 27.2-20.2 secs

Top speed 73-80mph **Mpg** 20-30

Price new £732/829/1054 (1952, Consul/Zephyr/Zephyr Convertible)

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 WHAT TO PAY
 Con/Zep/Zod (conv)

 Show/rebuilt
 £10k (22k)/15k/20k (30k)

 Average
 £4500 (14k)/6k/8k (18k)

 Restoration
 £1k (5k)/2k/2500 (7500)



OUR VERDICT

With strong club, enthusiast and specialist support, more Mk1s are returning to the road and rising values mean that proper restoration is becoming worthwhile, though some still get heavily customised. Many have been bodged over the years, and rot can be extensive and tricky to eradicate, so inspect any potential purchase carefully and buy the best. Missing original trim is more of a problem than a later engine.

FOR

Sturdy body, modern engine and suspension and quality fittings mean the Consul, Zephyr and Zodiac remain usable. Delightful convertibles

AGAINST

Rampant rot has claimed many, and it can be hard to spot bodged restoration work. Detail trim items, especially chrome, are scarce



One you can buy

Year 1953 Recorded mileage 85,383
Price £9995 Vendor Cleevewood Garage, Bristol;
0117 956 7144; allsportscars.co.uk For Excellent
body; sweet engine Against Interior needs love

Being sold out of long-term ownership, this Consul is a remarkably solid survivor. The paint is relatively recent and all four wheelarches are clean and sound, as are the front and rear valances. The bootlid is in fine condition and the boot itself is good, with an ancient crossply spare inside; the four tyres that are fitted are new radials. There's a slight scuff behind the offside headlamp, and another tiny mark on the trailing corner of the driver's door, plus the seals for the quarterlights have gone hard and need replacing. The chrome is all present and correct, though, and very presentable if not quite pristine. The sills and floorpans are sound, too.

The trim is almost certainly original, but there's a small tear to the seatback on the passenger side of the front bench. While it seems a shame to lose that originality, the headlining is discoloured and starting to wear above the passenger door; a new one would transform the cabin. The engine idles evenly and quietly – there's a new battery, and an in-line fuel filter has been fitted. There's a buzzing noise from the speedo, but the brakes are effective and have a solid feel. The controls are light once you're under way, and the three-speed gearbox operates smoothly. The car will be sold with an MoT.



The Consul's bodywork is all solid and it presents very well



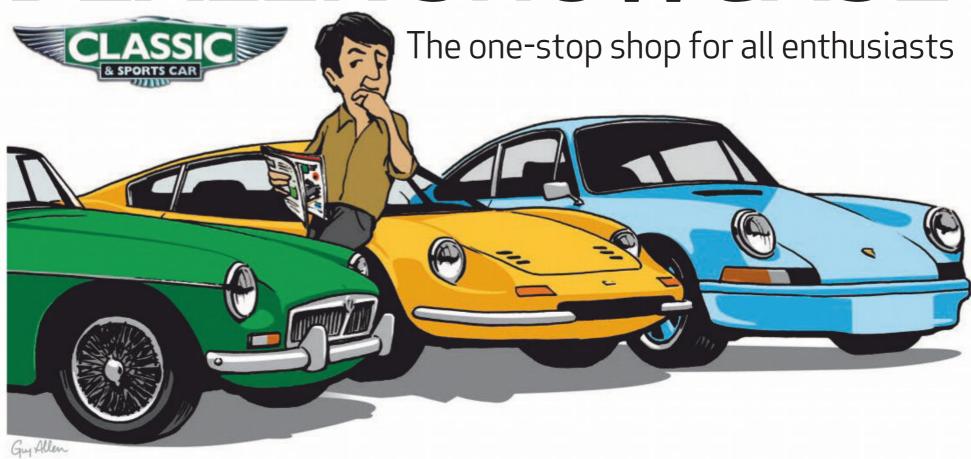
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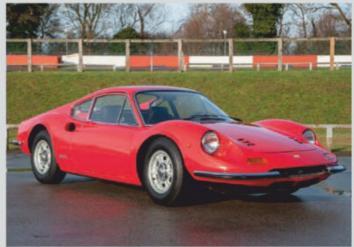
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MERCEDES 300SL GW EX PARIS MOTORSHOW 1954



1962 FERRARI 250 GT CABRIOLET S2



1962 PORSCHE 356 CARRERA 2



1964 PORSCHE 904 GTS

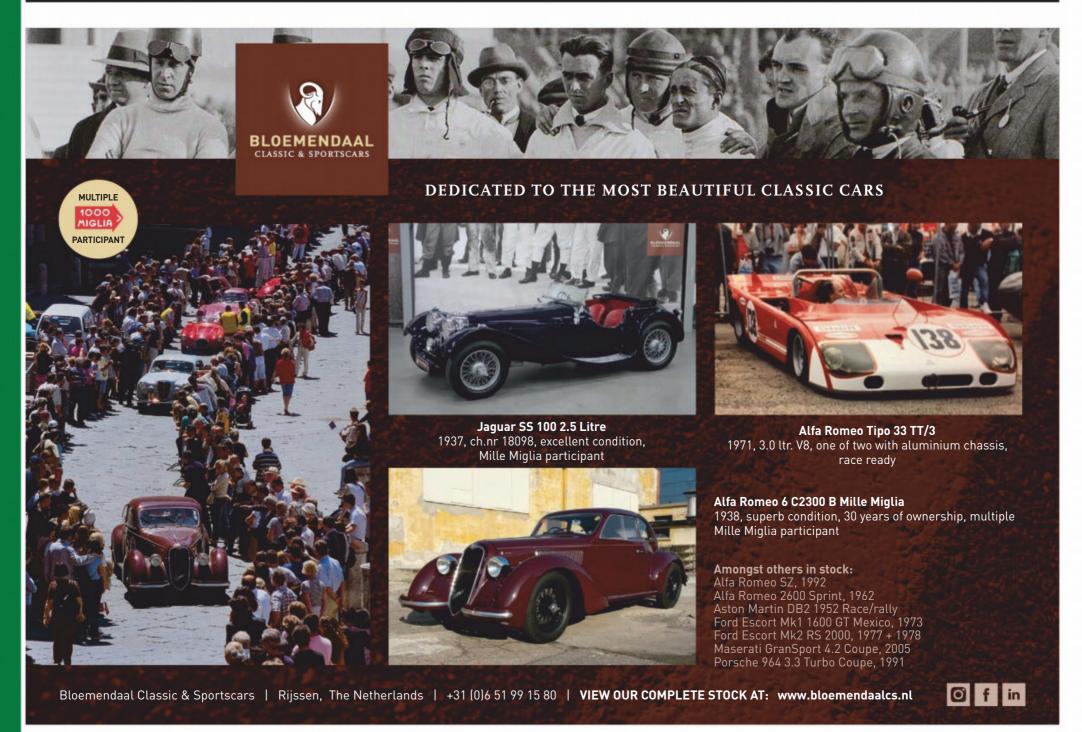


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Case histories

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Year of manufacture 1999 Recorded mileage 64,544
Asking price £30,950 Vendor The Private Collection, Oxfordshire;
01869 226633; www.theprivatecollection.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £40,595 Max power 316bhp Max torque 258lb ft
0-60mph 5.4 secs Top speed 155mph (ltd) Mpg 25

This S50-engined M Coupé (the S54 with an extra 5bhp came in 2001) was originally a demonstrator for Cooper Ipswich, and is heavily optioned including the 25% locking differential, M Sport steering wheel, smoker package and white indicators. With just two private owners since, including the vendor, an enthusiast who gently massages his collection from time to time, it has a full service history, the 10 stamps mostly from main dealers and the last from a local specialist in July at 64,489 miles. The all-important VANOS work has been done and the car has only ever run on synthetic oil – though we didn't see a bill for replacing the crank bearing shells.

The paint is all even and unscuffed, including under the chin, the only obvious blemish being a couple of scrapes on the left C-pillar, plus the usual few small stone-chips on the nose. The wheels aren't kerbed, and shod with well-treaded Dunlops, 2013-dated on the front and 2009s to the rear. The original full toolkit and first-aid kit are still in the boot.

Inside, it's basically unworn and looks like a much newer car. The seat leather isn't heavily worn, the dashboard plastics are all good, the carpets are protected by overmats and it still smells fresh inside.

The E36 M3-sourced motor is clean and tidy, and the fluids are still clear, as you would expect with only 60 miles since the most recent service. The M Coupé drives like a car with a much lower mileage and goes very well: you still marvel that a 3.2-litre straight-six is comfortable revving to more than 7000rpm, but it happily defies physics – though there's plenty of pull from lower down, when you're still travelling faster than most other traffic.

If you look at the on-paper figures and torque curves, the S50 produces its peak lower down than the S54 that superseded it – the same 258lb ft at 3250rpm, instead of 4900rpm – though the later car is a bit more progressive. Being one of the last of the old-school BMWs, its steering is nicely weighted, the brakes are smooth and the synchros work well. The MoT runs to July.





SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

No scuffs; the usual slight wear and tear

INTERIOR

Looks much more youthful than it is

MECHANICALS

FSH; VANOS has been done

VALUE ★★★★★☆☆☆☆

For Very well kept

Against Divisive looks; no evidence of crank bearing shell work

SHOULD I BUY IT?

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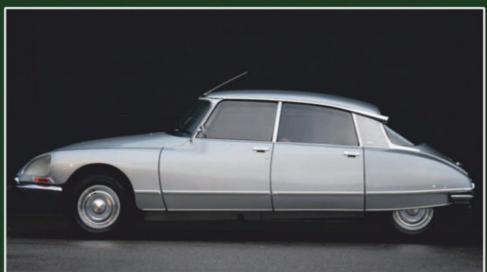




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Case histories

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JENSEN FF Mk2

Year of manufacture 1970 Recorded mileage 78,319**Asking price** £105,000 **Vendor** Classic Mobilia, near Milton Keynes; 07889 805432; www.classicmobilia.com

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £7705 Max power 325bhp Max torque 425lb ft **0-60mph** 7 secs **Top speed** 130mph **Mpg** 12

This Mk2 was largely refurbished and rebuilt by the owner's mechanic in Spain, and is being sold mostly because of a lack of use. That's partly down to the eye-watering fuel consumption, though it's as economical as an FF can be, running a new Holley carburettor instead of the original Carter (which is included), plus electronic ignition and no air-con.

The body is straight and the chassis appears rust-free: it remains very clean beneath with painted wheel wells, almost new-looking front springs, dampers and calipers, and good exhausts – the rear sections are stainless, but there are a couple of bean-can-and-clamp repairs further forward, though they don't leak.

There's no indication of how old the paint is but it's mostly good, with one small run on the left front corner. The Mk3 alloys are unscuffed, repainted and wear 2018-dated General Grabbers at the rear and worn Grand Ams on the front and spare, which lives inside because a 215/60 is too fat to fit the cradle.

Inside, the original leather is well creased in front and to the door pulls, less so in the rear. The courtesy lights run LEDs so you can see what you're doing, though there's a bulb-holder hanging out by the ignition switch, probably for the instruments because they don't appear to illuminate. The dash is all okay, with some refinishing to the centre console and a modern Pioneer stereo.

The big Chrysler motor is tidy, with some new coolant piping and wiring, plus extra main fuses to protect the loom. The oil is clean and halfway on the dipstick. It starts easily with a great big friendly wuffle and drives really well – better than an Interceptor, with lighter steering, and smooth gearchanges. It's not eager to kick down, but press the pedal hard into the carpet and it explodes with a sudden bellow of induction roar and takes off: splendid, and deceptively rapid, too. Oil pressure is 60psi most of the time it's running. It doesn't get hot, but the fans kick in promptly soon after you stop. The electric windows work, though the clock doesn't, and the registration number isn't included in the sale - but its original number, OKW 669H, should still be available.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

Straight, with mostly decent paint; rear hatch and seal in good shape **INTERIOR**

Well-worn original leather, but the rest looks tidy

MECHANICALS

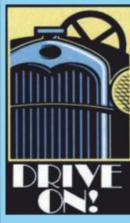
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1912 Mors 12/15hp tourer £29,500



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1932 Talbot AV 105 tourer £136,500



1933 Riley 9/12 sports special £68,500



1935 Lagonda M35R £127,500



1940 Ford V8 Peking-Paris car £59,500



1950 Talbot Lago T15 £52,500



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22,586 miles. One owner with full Lotus service history, light weight forged alloy wheels, 6 speed gearbox, 245BHP Supercharged engine with charge cooling, hard and soft tops, air conditioning, Clarion audio, British Racing Green / Yellow Stripe complimented with Grey Alcantara interior, legendary handling and performance.



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A lovely example of a rare and desirable Series 2, repatriated from the USA in 2011 and subject to major restoration work which was completed in 2013 - including the rebuild of the 109E Cosworth engine and original Weber carburettors, gearbox overhaul, suspension, brakes and steering all refreshed, all instruments restored and calibrated, rolling road setup (114 BHP), correct steel wheels, complete with Lotus Certificate of Provenance, a really usable car with great patina and character. £29,000



LOTUS EVORA S SPORTS RACER 4 V6, 2014

A stunning example with only 13,667 miles and full Lotus service history (including invoices), finished in Solar Yellow metallic - including the roof and sills, complimented with full black leather Recarco interior with red detailing, Alpine touch screen Sat Nav, reversing camera, stone chip protection, supercharged 346BHP, air conditioning, cruise control, fantastic condition throughout. £41,950



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1971 BMW 2002 Ti Gr-2

The car was completely rebuilt as a Gr-2 racing car in 2015 by the specialist company Seegarage Portmann. The racecar was only used for 2 hours on a trackday and has not yet driven a race. The car is in absolute new condition. Swiss registration (cancelled) and valid FIA HTP until 31.12.2025. Engine 1990ccm, with Weber carburettor and 200HP

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EUR 350'000

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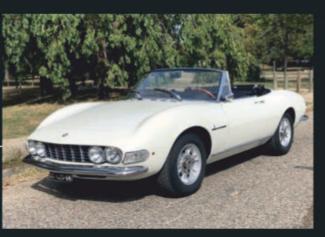
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2014 Lotus Evora S 2+2 Isotope Grn/ Blk+Gry 8.8KMi 3.5L V6 Sprchrgd.\$67K

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1958 MG Magnette Saloon Fr.Blue/Tan 1500cc 4Spd Show Quality.....\$25k

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2005 Morgan Roadster Brandywine/Tan 3.0L Ford V6 Air Cond. 15.7k Miles .. POA

1978 Rolls Royce Corniche Conv. Red/ Magnolia Pwr. Top+Seats+Wndws.....\$39k



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Case histories We test the classics that you can buy



MERCEDES-BENZ 300b CABRIOLET

Year of manufacture 1954 Recorded mileage 18,553 Asking price £195,000 Vendor John Brown, Herts; 07860 264932

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £3301 (saloon) Max power 123bhp Max torque 163lb ft 0-60mph 15 secs Top speed 99mph Mpg 15

This massive, imposing and rare in right-hand drive W186 was restored by a previous owner, which included buying a 300 saloon from Poland for its floorpans to keep the car as factory-original as possible. The job took several years and cost more than £250k. The paint is perfect, deep and flawless, and the chrome almost so, with only light pickling to the headlight rims and slightly squint tail-lights detracting. The rear plinth is a little pitted under the plating, but it's original so it was decided to keep it, and there are one or two dimples in the rad shell. The front doors sit a touch proud lower down, but shut well; the rears are much better. The tyres are well-treaded Silvertown crossplies.

Inside, the leather is new and the timber has been refinished – with a couple of curious 'plug' repairs to the driver's door capping where a handle may have been mounted. The massive hood is fresh, and easy to fold and erect.

The 2996cc straight-six motor – whose architecture is basically the same as the 300SL Gullwing's – is clean and tidy. The oil is cleanish and just over 'max', the coolant green and full, and there's a period-looking battery.

It starts instantly from cold, is mechanically quiet and drives beautifully, making super-smooth progress. The gearchange and synchromesh are good, and the recirculating-ball steering turns surprisingly tightly for such a big car. The all-drum brakes have quite long travel but pull up okay, the oil pressure is the typical Benz full-deflection 45psi on the gauge, with temperature steady at 180°F. The self-levelling rear suspension still works – you can hear the system engage when you play with the control, bringing in an extra torsion bar to increase stiffness by 25%.

The Mercedes will be sold with its original handbooks and operating instructions, plus three folders containing good-sized copies of workshop drawings. The distinctive registration number (not shown) was with the car from new and is included. It's a hard thing to value and has been on the market for some time, but it's for sale for a lot less than it cost to restore.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

Smart and shiny; slight pitting to the rear plinth

INTERIOR

New leather, carpets and top, plus refinished timber

MECHANICALS

All rebuilt and drives perfectly

VALUE ★★★★★★☆☆

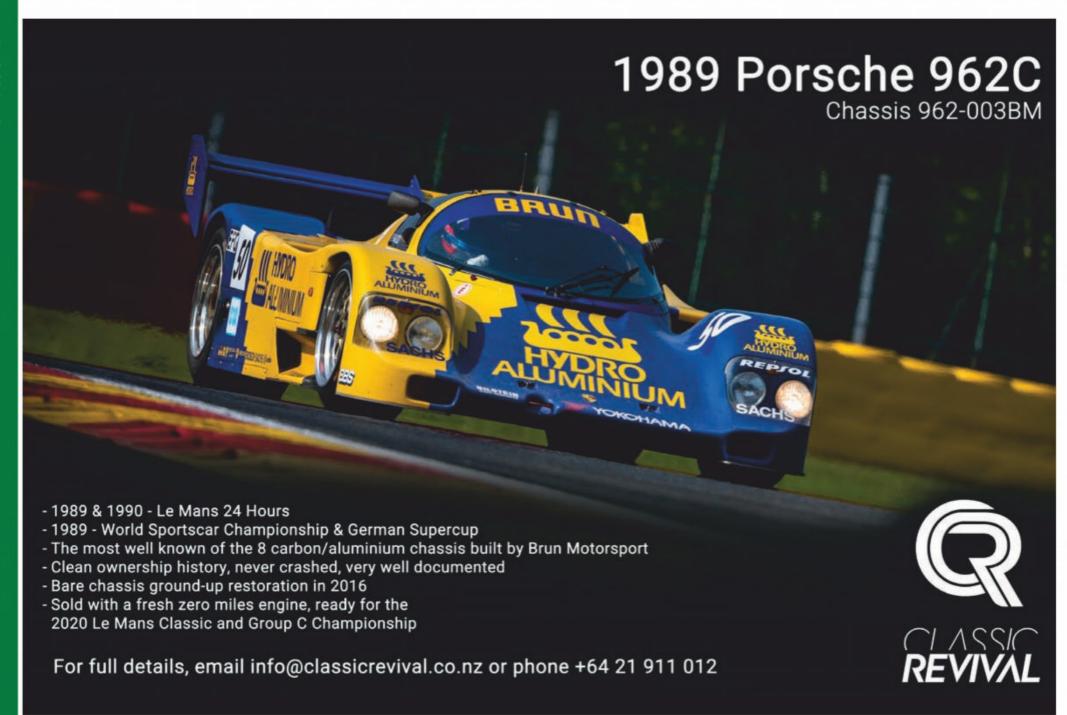
For Magnificent

Against Limited market, especially in right-hand drive

SHOULD I BUY IT?

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1974 Jaguar E Type Series 3 V12 Roadster



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1981 Talbot Sunbeam. 2200cc. Manual. 1973 Jaguar E Type V12 Roadster. 1953 Ford Consul. 1500cc 61,000 miles. RHD. F.S.H. 5 speed Dogleg Box, 5300cc. Manual, 76,000 miles. RHD. UK Transmission. Manual. RHD. New LSD, Uprated suspension, half cage, minilites, Car, Full service history, extensive restoration tyres, some history, exceptional plus much more! full engine rebuild 200 miles carried out by well known specialist. £99,999 condition, 12 months MOT. £10,995 ago, Circa 215 BHP. £27,995 (Choice of 2)









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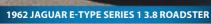


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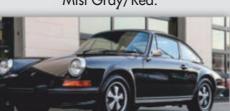
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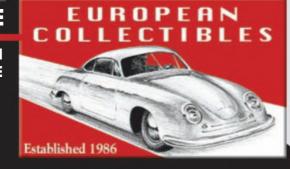


2019 Porsche 911 GT2 RS Weissach GT: Siver Metallic/Black.

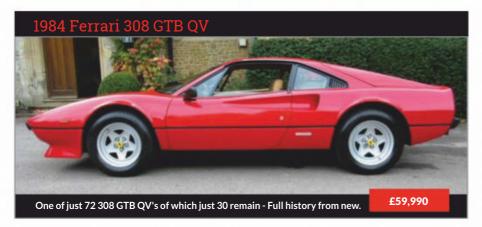
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BENTLEY S STD SALOON 1957. VIN:B484EG

The car is in very fine condition with a nice paint and chrome, including new hub caps. The interior is in a nicely patinated condition. The wood panels are also very fine. Mechanically, the car is very good, it was with us for review of the mechanics in autumn 2018 and then repaired for 180,000 SEK. Among other things, this included a big service, front suspension, brakes, etc. The car is now being sold on behalf of an estate. Price very moderate SEK 365,000. Approximately £ 30.000.

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Jaguar XK120 OTS, 1950



Ferrari 195 Inter Ghia, 1951



Chevron B19, ex Ray Bellm

Alfa Romeo 1900 Sprint Pininfarina, 1953. AC Bristol Roadster, 1958. Aston Martin Short Chassis, 1933. Diva GT C-Type FIA, 1965. Ferrari 250GT Boano, 1956. Ferrari 250GT Lusso, 1963. Ferrari Testarossa Monospecchio, 1986.

Ferrari 550 barchetta, 2001. Lancia Aurelica B24 America Spider, 1955. Lancia Delta HF Dealer, 1995.

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Riley 9 Dixon Racing Special, 1932

Maserati Trofeo racing, 2003. Mini Cooper S, 1971. FIA G2 racing-car MG-B SEC Turbo, '80. 1 of 5 by MGOC. Mercedes 280SL, manual. 1970. Mercedes SLS AMG, 2010. Moretti 1200 Sport Spider. 1955. Porsche 997 Cup-racer. 2014 Specs. Riley 9 Brooklands Le Mans, 1932. Siata 300BC barchetta 1100, 1953.

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Case histories

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PORSCHE 924 TURBO

Year of manufacture 1982 Recorded mileage 10,042 Asking price £9000 Vendor The Market, Oxfordshire; 01865 521088; themarket.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £13,629 Max power 168bhp Max torque 180lb ft 0-60mph 7 secs Top speed 140mph Mpg 21

This tidy turbo is a previous *C&SC* cover car – in January 1998, with Roger Bell – and is now on its 11th owner, this one since 2016. It's holding up very well, and has had an engine rebuild (63,000 miles ago) and several cambelts, with 11 stamps (plus four brake/fluid/coolant change stamps) in the service book to February 1998 with Maltins at 86,000 miles. There have been bills since, too, including another head rebuild after a spark plug stuck. Old MoTs going back to 1987 confirm little mileage in recent years.

It's had various areas of paint but the body is all straight and it appears to be clean and rot-free underneath. The hatch drains are clear and, most crucially, all of the drain pipes are still attached – and the rear lock escutcheon that always cracks has been replaced. That other weak point of the 924 bodyshell, the battery tray – which corrodes and potentially drowns the electrics below – is in good shape, though mysteriously the passenger footwell carpet is damp on the right near the transmission tunnel, but not the overmat. The alloys are refinished, shod with 2013-dated Continentals showing plenty of tread, and the spacesaver spare has never been used. The paint-code sticker is still present nearby. The stainless exhaust looks to be in good order.

Inside, the driver's seat is only lightly worn, the rears look unused and the carpets are all pretty good, plus there's a new gearlever gaiter. The dash was swapped for a refurbished item in 1997 but has inevitably cracked since. New ones are now available again.

The motor is tidy, with clear blue coolant and the oil clean and mid-level. It starts easily, is mechanically quiet and drives well. The dogleg five-speed 'box was rebuilt with new synchros in 2017 and 2019, and they all work well. The brakes pull up straight, oil pressure is 4bar at 4000rpm (rising to 4.5bar at 5000) and the temperature stays in the cold section of the gauge, though the fan comes on when you stop. The headlights lift, the clock works and you wind your own windows on this one. It is sold with a handbook and an MoT until July.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

Solid, with some new paint and redone wheels

INTERIOR

Holding up well; cracked dash **MECHANICALS**

Past engine and gearbox rebuilds

VALUE ★★★★★★☆☆☆

For Well preserved and drives nicely **Against** Damp footwell needs investigation

SHOULD I BUY IT?

Though air-cooled 911s appear to be dipping back under £30k, this is a third of the price – and an important part of Porsche history



Austin Healey 3000 Mk 2 BT7 Tri Carb. Ex US car. Subject of an older, fully documented nut and bolt restoration by leading marque specialist with only summer use since. Meticulously maintained throughout. Finished in pale primrose yellow with black trim & weather equipment. Fitted with works rally style grille, front wing cooling vents, rear bumperettes, tubular exhaust manifold with sports exhaust system, 72 spoke chrome wire wheels and overdrive. £65,000

Austin Healey 100/4 BNI. 1954 Original RHD export car supplied to Sydney, Australia. In 2005 this car was the subject of a nut and bolt restoration with only summer use since. Finished in Healey Ice Blue with blue leather trim and blue weather equipment. Fitted with its original 3 speed gearbox, overdrive and chrome wire wheels. We will supply this car fully serviced with 12 months MOT, spare keys, jack, wheel hammer, driver's handbook and warranty. £69,950



Austin Healey 3000 MK3 BJ8 Phase 2. Ex US car which has been the subject of an older but total restoration with very little use since. Currently in our workshop being re commissioned. Finished in classic duotone colour scheme of Healey Blue over lvory White with blue trim and weather equipment. Fitted with 72 spoke chrome wire wheels, overdrive, wood rim steering wheel & radio. £75,000



Austin Healey 3000 Mk 2 BT7. 1961 RHD Home market car still, retains its original registration number along with original green folding log book and driver's handbook. Finished in Colorado red with beige interior and black mohair hood. Body restoration and exterior repaint in 2007 with only summer use since. Fitted with a Mk 3 engine, 2" HD8 carburettors, wire wheels and overdrive. Mechanically and structurally very good with excellent paintwork. £49,950

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Cosworth Sevens

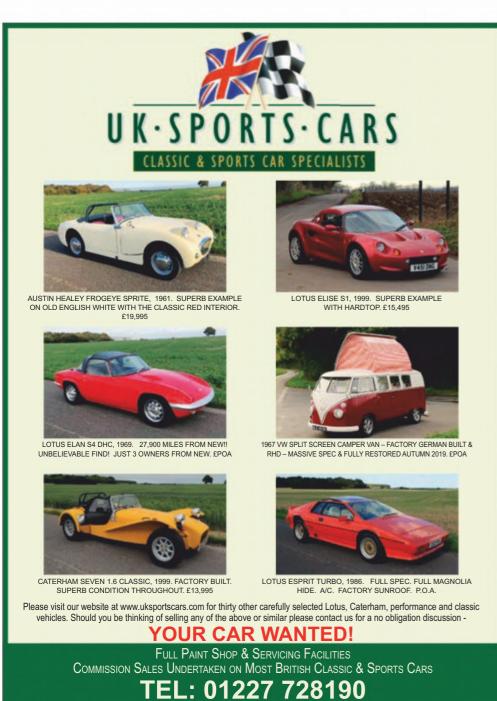
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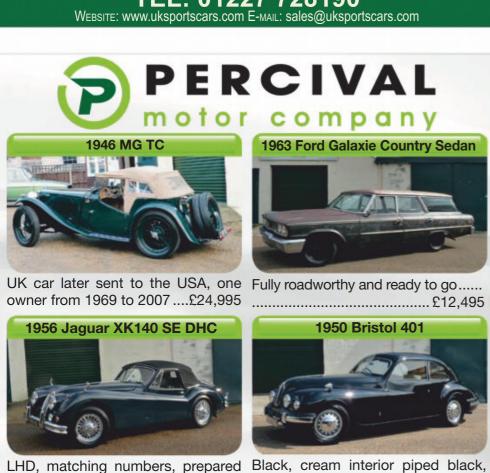
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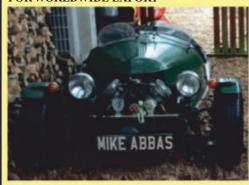
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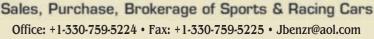


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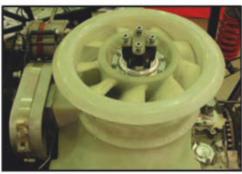
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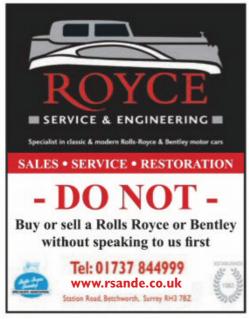
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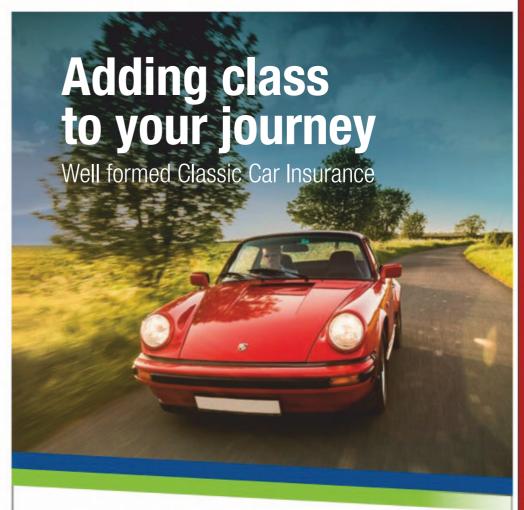
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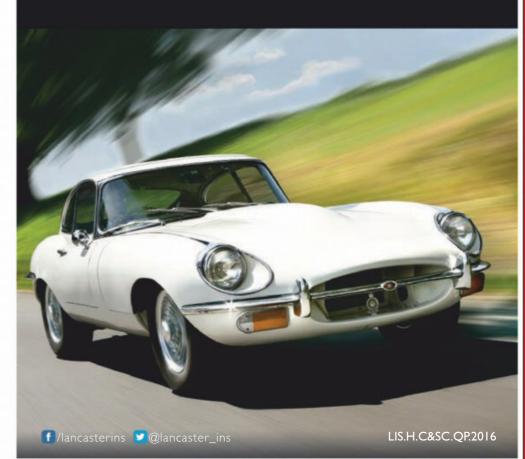
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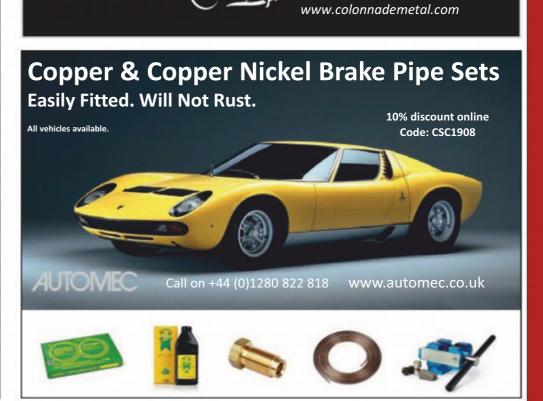
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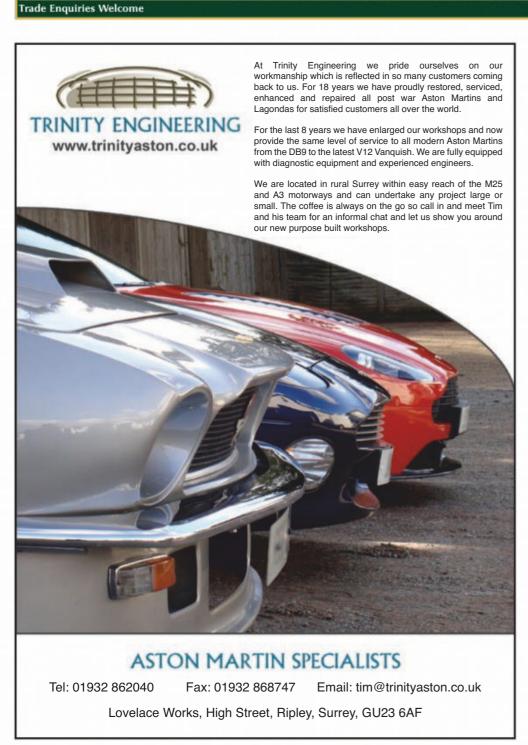






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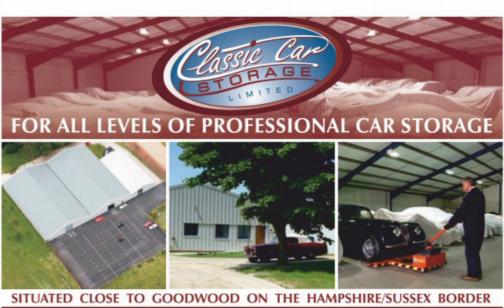
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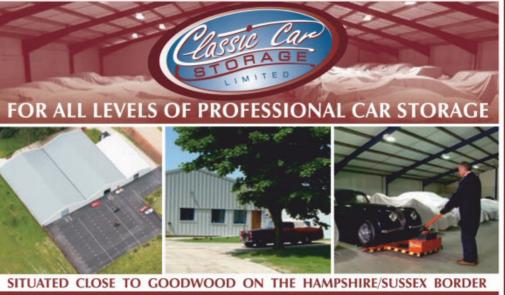
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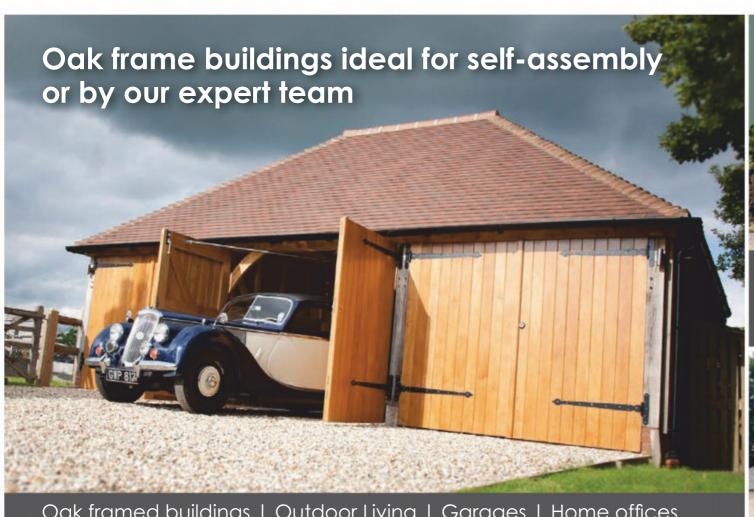
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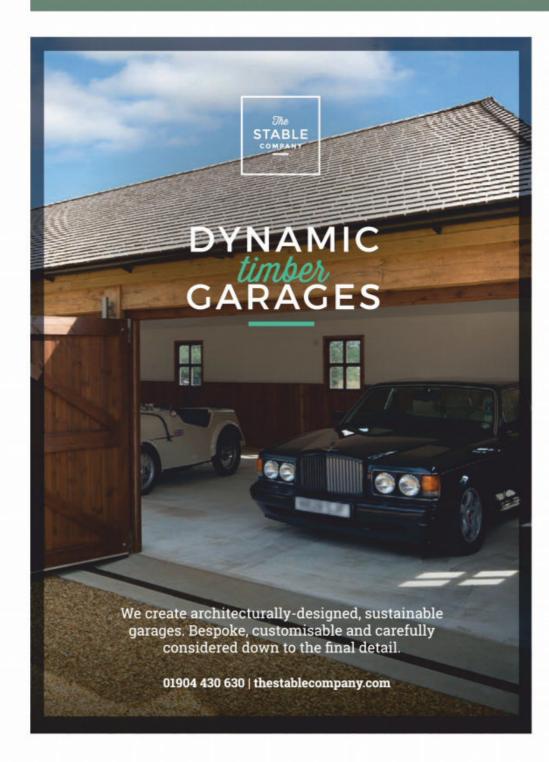
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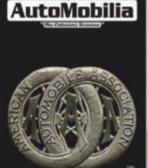
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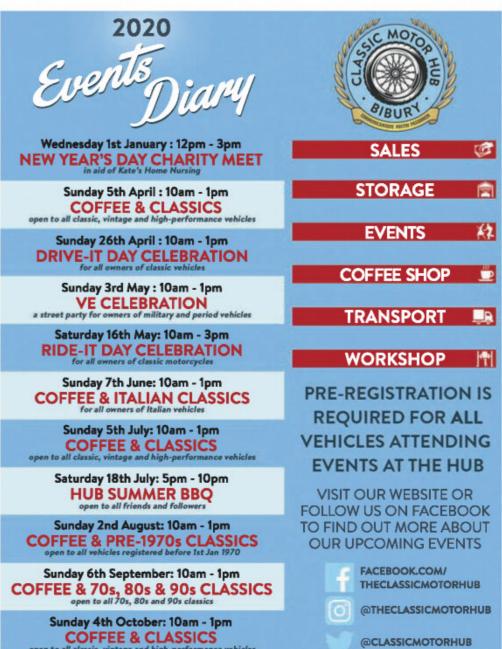
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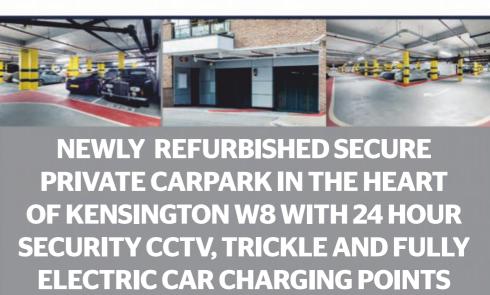
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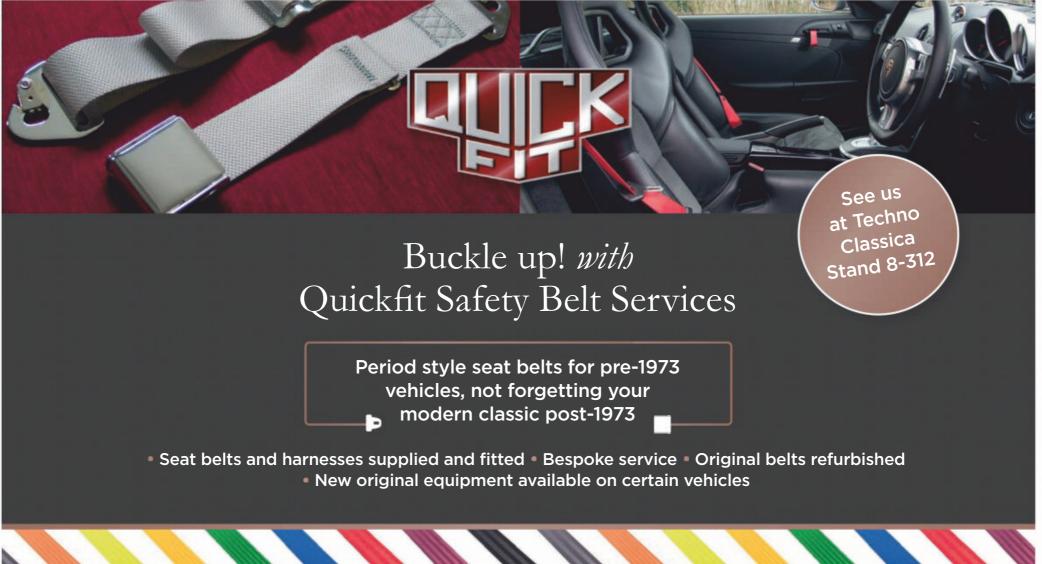
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V GOLF GTI TCR

The run-out special edition Golf GTI that has become unexpectedly important

WORDS JACK PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY LUC LACEY

e could pretend that we requested the keys to this Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR because we knew VW was about to pull the plug on its combustion-engined racing development programmes. But it was simply fortunate timing.

The TCR series, which this model celebrates, replaced the World Touring Car Championship in 2015 with a promise of lower costs and cars as close to roadgoing stock as possible. That may sound familiar – like the Touring Cars of old, maybe. Volkswagen was among the many that built a cash cow/car, selling to privateers and offering factory assistance at a cost.

Volkswagen was rarely seen in Touring Cars, but for the brief Passat tenure in the BTCC and the early Mk1/2 privateers, or in motorsport in general, in fact. But still, this TCR edition is the last bastion of VW's motorsport heritage as we know it and should be collectable for that alone.

That translates on to the road by means of a 44bhp power hike compared to the 242bhp GTI Performance, a door decal, and the TCR logo being projected on to the floor when the doors are open. A race-inspired rear splitter extends out the back and the front bumpers are reworked, while Alcantara covers the door cards and seats.

Via an option pack the 18in wheels gain an inch, the suspension is lower (by 20mm), the





shock absorbers are tweaked and the speed limiter is removed (up to 164mph). Until the eighth-generation Golf comes on stream, this is the peak of the hatchback's range, price-wise. The limited-run two-seat Clubsport is long sold out, and the faster R is some £1500 cheaper.

The TCR is certainly quick enough, causing the traction control light to become a familiar flicker as the front wheels struggle to lay that turbocharged 286bhp down. There's no fourwheel-drive here like in the slightly more powerful Golf R, but it still hits 60mph from standstill in just 5.6 secs. And it feels every tenth.

The ride is harsh, calling into question how much use the five-door's rear two will get, and road noise can be intrusive. But there's enough space for a full allocation in the back – comfort is another matter. Perhaps its best role is as a weekly commuter and only sometime family transport.

The handling is excellent, with kart-direct steering through bends that is light when necessary and weighty when called upon or pressed hard. The dual-cluch DSG is responsive when in the right mode – with Sport selected it will rarely be anything but primed for the hammer down, in Eco it requires a bit more advance notice and is more progressive.

It wasn't conceived as Volkswagen's sayonara to racing, but for the Mk7 Golf instead. Happily, it's a worthy farewell to both.





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